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Earl Warren Oral History Project

RICHARD M. NIXON IN THE WARREN ERA

Frank E. Jorgensen	The Organization of Richard Nixon's Congressional Campaigns, 1946-1952
Roy Day	Campaigning with Richard Nixon, 1946-1952
John Walton Dinkelspiel	Recollections of Richard Nixon's 1950 Senatorial Campaign in Northern California
Earl Adams	Financing Richard Nixon's Campaigns From 1946 to 1960
Roy P. Crocker	Gathering Southern California Support for Richard Nixon in the 1950 Senate Race

Interviews Conducted by
Amelia R. Fry
in 1975

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PREFACE

The Earl Warren Oral History Project, a special project of the Regional Oral History Office, was inaugurated in 1969 to produce tape-recorded interviews with persons prominent in the arenas of politics, governmental administration, and criminal justice during the Warren Era in California. Focusing on the years 1925-1953, the interviews were designed not only to document the life of Chief Justice Warren but to gain new information on the social and political changes of a state in the throes of a depression, then a war, then a postwar boom.

An effort was made to document the most significant events and trends by interviews with key participants who spoke from diverse vantage points. Most were queried on the one or two topics in which they were primarily involved; a few interviewees with special continuity and breadth of experience were asked to discuss a multiplicity of subjects. While the cut-off date of the period studied was October 1953, Earl Warren's departure for the United States Supreme Court, there was no attempt to end an interview perfunctorily when the narrator's account had to go beyond that date in order to complete the topic.

The interviews have stimulated the deposit of Warreniana in the form of papers from friends, aides, and the opposition; government documents; old movie newsreels; video tapes; and photographs. This Earl Warren collection is being added to The Bancroft Library's extensive holdings on twentieth century California politics and history.

The project has been financed by four outright grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, a one year grant from the California State Legislature through the California Heritage Preservation Commission, and by gifts from local donors which were matched by the Endowment. Contributors include the former law clerks of Chief Justice Earl Warren, the Cortez Society, many long-time supporters of "the Chief," and friends and colleagues of some of the major memoirists in the project. The Roscoe and Margaret Oakes Foundation and the San Francisco Foundation have jointly sponsored the Northern California Negro Political History Series, a unit of the Earl Warren Project.

Particular thanks are due the Friends of The Bancroft Library who were instrumental in raising local funds for matching, who served as custodian for all such funds, and who then supplemented from their own treasury all local contributions on a one-dollar-for-every-three dollars basis.

The Regional Oral History Office was established to tape record autobiographical interviews with persons prominent in the history of California and the West. The Office is under the administrative supervision of James D. Hart, Director of The Bancroft Library.

Amelia R. Fry, Director
Earl Warren Oral History Project

Willa K. Baum, Department Head
Regional Oral History Office

30 June 1976
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* Deceased during the term of the project.

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INTRODUCTION

This series of memoirs is by design a modest effort to get a picture of Richard M. Nixon's campaigns during the time that the Republican party, led by Earl Warren, dominated the state of California. As a man whose political birth occurred in 1946, Nixon was a topic that deserved the status of a sub-series within the Earl Warren Oral History Project.

Although none of the men interviewed about Nixon participated in the later drama called Watergate, it was necessary to postpone their interviews until the last segment of the Warren series. These Nixon campaign leaders recorded their interviews for this volume early in 1975, two-and-a-half years after the "plumbers" broke into the Democratic party headquarters, less than two years after Alexander Butterfield revealed the existence of the secret tapes in the Nixon Oval Office, and six months after the president resigned and abruptly flew to his estate in San Clemente. Neither they nor I were immune to the reverberations of Watergate. All the interviewees, with the exception of Mr. Dinkelspiel, mentioned receiving recent telephone calls from Nixon, a few miles away at San Clemente. Our recording sessions had a tension that kept pulling us clear of the territory around the subject of Watergate. However, Roy Day's natural exuberance bounced him over many sensitive potholes, and Frank Jorgensen candidly dismissed the Watergate affair in one blunt word, "stupid."

J. Walton Dinkelspiel, a moderate Republican and friend of Earl Warren, was the first to interview, on January 31, 1975, in San Francisco. (Three months later he taped a second session.) On February 19th and 20th, Roy O. Day, Earl Adams, and Roy Crocker, who might well call themselves "Nixon pioneers" because they helped launch his first campaign, taped their accounts in Southern California. A fourth pioneer, Frank E. Jorgensen, added his recollections in April in the Bay Area. Asa Call, fundraiser and kingmaker par excellence, added a brief few minutes of comment in the vigorous, salty style that was still characteristic of the powerful insurance executive even at age 82. Because of its brevity, the edited transcript of the tape with Mr. Call was deposited in The Bancroft Library after his death in 1978.

There were eight political campaigns in which Nixon was a contender between 1946 and 1968, when he became president. In the first four, Earl Warren was also running his own campaigns, alternating gubernatorial with presidential races, the latter either as head of a delegation or (1948) as a vice-presidential candidate. As the years passed, Warren's immense popularity began eroding, inevitably for one who for so long had had so much bipartisan support under California's cross-filing system. Nixon likewise utilized the system to run on both Democratic and Republican primary tickets.

This selection of interviewees ranges over all eight campaigns, but the emphasis is on Nixon's 1946 entry; all the narrators except Mr. Dinkelspiel were a part of it. Only Jorgensen remembers much about Nixon's re-election to Congress two years later, but his race against Helen Gahagan Douglas in 1950 for the U.S. Senate is covered by three: Jorgensen, Day, and to some extent Crocker. Jorgensen and Day also make the 1952 convention and vice-presidential campaign the subject of retrospection, with Adams adding his assessment of the much-publicized Nixon Fund.

There is some splash-over that sprinkles comments beyond the Warren era. Jorgensen has some comments about the Republican fissions of 1956 among the Knight, Knowland, and Nixon factions, each of which was striving to fill the vacuum created by Earl Warren's departure to the Supreme Court. Adams touches upon the 1960 election, speculates about why Nixon lost the race for governor in 1962, and goes on to tell of Nixon's decision to run for president in 1968; Jorgensen also has a story about 1962, and relates his experiences as chairman of the executive committee for fundraising in 1968. Some of the narrations are just that, but at times there is reflection on what makes a campaign work (Jorgensen), why a campaign fails (Adams on the 1962 race), and what Nixon should have done but didn't, such as pile the White House tapes on the lawn and burn them, (that from Day).

Interestingly, or perhaps logically enough, Adams, Call, and Crocker all were found either in or across the street from the Pacific Mutual Building at 523 West Sixth Street in Los Angeles, the location of many state headquarters of the largest savings and loan institutions, insurance companies, and corporate law firms. Each man was in easy touch with the other, and each recommended that we interview the others. Harold Morton, a major oil lobbyist, was also at 523 West Sixth, and Asa Call felt that the series would be incomplete without him; however, Morton had long since declined to be interviewed as a part of the Earl Warren project.

The project research and several preceding interviews raised broad questions by the time the Nixon leaders were taped. What did Nixon's striving to be Eisenhower's running mate in 1952 do, if anything, to or for Earl Warren's determined bid for the presidential nomination? What, if any, was Nixon's role in Eisenhower's appointment of Earl Warren to the Supreme Court? Where was Nixon's clout in relation to the Werdel delegation's challenge to Warren in the 1952 primaries? And what portion of the contributions from big campaign donors--agribusiness, oil, insurance, savings and loan corporations--was Nixon's, compared with Warren's?

We knew that the interviewees were busy men; we expected that the sessions would not be as detailed as our research for questions had been, and this proved to be true. Nonetheless, the effort had to be made to gather historical evidence in as much detail as the interview time would permit. At the very least, we hoped to recapture some of the old campaign strategies which

later, according to some writers, evolved into different, more sophisticated campaigns.* Also, no other oral history office was working on Nixon's early years in politics, although California State Fullerton's series on Nixon contained three interviews that included political topics. Plans for the usual presidential library (which would have included an oral history program) had collapsed and the Richard M. Nixon Foundation was disbanding; finally, the ownership of Nixon's White House documents was in litigation. It seemed that any testimony that could be preserved, even if only a sub-series of the Earl Warren Era project, would have some value for historians.

The hour was late. The actuarial imperative, against which all oral historians race, had already claimed two potential interviewees, Bernard Brennan and Rockwood Nelson. The other Warren era leaders were past middle age or, like Roy Crocker, were well into retirement age although still on the job. We attempted to interview Richard Nixon himself for this series. The ex-President was asked, via Rose Mary Wood, to contribute a taping session on early campaigns, but his aide, Colonel Jack Brennan, turned us down in March of 1977; Rose Wood pointed out that Nixon was deep into the production of his first post-presidency book and that David Frost was just beginning the television interviews. We waited. In the meantime Mr. Day encouraged us to ask again and to use his name. ("Tell Dick I said he owes it to his home state and the people that got him started.") But our second request also met with a negative from Colonel Brennan by phone on October 13, 1978, with the suggestion that if we would forward a particular question we might be wondering about from time to time, Mr. Nixon could reply by letter (presumably through an aide). We did have some particular questions, mainly on the matter of the general chronology of events in 1946; none of the sources in print agreed. We are indebted to Ken Khachijian, a San Clemente researcher, for straightening out some anachronisms of meeting dates and for giving us the lead that the best chronology in print is in the Whittier News special edition that was published on the eve of the inauguration of its home town boy in 1969.

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*Nixon critic Frank Mankiewicz in Perfectly Clear (New York: Popular Library, 1973, page 87) sees 1962 as the campaign in which Nixon shifted from tactics that manipulated hot issues such as communism to his advantage, to manipulating the election process itself, such as sending out a mass mailing to "fellow Democrats." However, Steven Hess, a 1962 speechwriter for Nixon, saw the main strategy of that campaign as "offering the strongest possible bulwark against the worst tendencies of entrenched power"--meaning the Democrats under Governor Edmund G. Brown. (Quoted by Mark Harris in Mark the Glove Boy (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964, page 68.)

Very special thanks are due to Evelyn Dorn, Nixon's long-time California secretary, who at the time was helping in the final organization of material that would be put with the Whittier College Nixon project, which was being turned over to the U.S. Archives branch at Laguna Niguel.* In that collection were 365 interviews focussed on Nixon as a youth, and "thousands" of pictures, many from Nixon's mother, all of which she and Ed and Don Nixon had gone over and dated and identified. Evelyn Dorn's knowledge of Nixon's life in the forties and fifties was impressive, and her advice and help with the tasks of lining up our interviewees deserves our special thanks. Finally, we are indebted to Professor Paul Bullock of UCLA, who had interviewed many of these men for his biography of Nixon's first opponent, Jerry Voorhis.

Considerable oral history documentation still needs to be done with knowledgeable persons about Richard Nixon's career, but there are no national efforts to organize such a project, as of the summer of 1980. There is still time; such projects have been undertaken for other presidential administrations. In the meantime, the subject of Richard Nixon can be found as a topic in many other Regional Oral History Office interviews dealing with the Earl Warren era, and also the subsequent administrations of Goodwin Knight and Edmund G. Brown.

Amelia R. Fry, Project Director
Earl Warren Oral History Project

7 July 1980
Washington, D.C.

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*National Archives and Records Service, Federal Archives and Records Center, Archives Branch, 24000 Avila Road, Laguna Niguel, California, 92677.



Frank Jorgensen
ca. 1950

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Berkeley, California

Earl Warren Oral History Project

Frank E. Jorgensen

THE ORGANIZATION OF RICHARD NIXON'S CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGNS, 1946-1952

An Interview Conducted by
Amelia R. Fry
in 1975

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INTERVIEW HISTORY--Frank Jorgensen

Time of Interviews: April 1 and April 22, 1975

Place of Interviews: Mr. Jorgensen's home, Hillsborough, California

Those present at Interview: Mr. Jorgensen and the interviewer

The Interview:

Frank Jorgensen was an indispensable campaign manager, an organizer who served in nearly every one of Nixon's campaigns, sometimes as finance chairman, sometimes with no official title at all, just "ramrod." He was that, certainly: tough-minded, sure of his plans and political strategies, determined and effective in fund-raising, and dedicated to his candidate. Whenever we considered interviewing the persons who had been the most instrumental and the most consistent in Nixon's California campaigns, Jorgensen's name was always at or near the top of the list. As his candidate rose in the political world, so too did Jorgensen's position in the insurance industry. Jorgensen clashed briefly with his employers in 1952, when the corporate leaders insisted that he pull back from politics and stick wholly to the insurance business, but Jorgensen managed to keep both jobs by doing his political work on a strictly volunteer basis.

I interviewed Frank Jorgensen in his spacious house, which spreads out along a hilltop above San Francisco Bay. Jorgensen greeted me at the door, a heavyset man slightly taller than average. Our first interview session was held at his desk, in his study. His chair squeaked in protest as he occasionally leaned back, seemingly to recreate the picture of the past against the ceiling, then rocked forward and talked straight to the interviewer, close to the microphone. Both sessions started with an almost dictation-like delivery with Jorgensen solemn and attentive, cautiously picking his words, even adding "period" and "comma" for the transcriber. As each session continued, however, it became more of a conversation, with digressions from the straight narrative to distillations of his experience, rules of thumb on how to win elections, and the evolution of election practices during his career. A wink (unfortunately inaudible) or a twinkle would make the ironies and deliberate understatements, but he was never coy. He either answered a question or frankly shunted it aside, shaking his head with a firm "no comment" or its equivalent. My impression is that there may be holes here and there in his picture of the period, but there are not distortions outside the normal range of difficulty of recall.

He asked that the second session be held in the living room, which overlooked the garden where an even and green lawn was bounded by flower beds exploding with spring color. He sat in a large lounge chair which swiveled,

now toward the window with his right elbow on our card table, then suddenly a 180° turn with its occupant staring intently at the hallway; later, explaining an elementary law of politics to me, he would sit upright with the table and microphone dead ahead. No squeaks on this chair, but a clock offstage faithfully recorded each passing quarter hour.

The sessions evolved into a procedure that seemed the most natural for us: I arrived loaded with outlines, questions, and papers that might stir his memory, such as Nixon's mailers from the 1950 campaign, after mailing ahead the chronologies, notes from newspaper files, and xeroxed passages from pertinent books. The memory prods were usually given short shrift--he knew what he remembered and it was sufficient--and he told his story as it unrolled in his mind. Then came my turn, to fill in with whatever questions he had not covered. We continued this procedure through each campaign.

At the first session, he and his wife and I took a long lunch break at mid-day at a restaurant with a breathtaking view of the lowlands toward San Francisco Bay near Hillsborough. His experiences as a young executive with the insurance company formed the lunch conversation, one I hoped we could tape later, but our time before the microphone was filled with politics and we never got back to insurance. Suffice it to say that his present wife had also worked for the company. When his first wife died he found himself tragically lonely, unbearably so. Returning to his old offices in Los Angeles one day, he and Helen renewed their acquaintance, and later when he suggested she come to Hillsborough as his wife, she retorted she wasn't sure she could put up with "such an irascible bastard." They both chuckled over the story.

With the help of Teresa Allen, we combed the transcript for ambiguities and made a list of further questions, all of which was sent to him September 29, 1978. Before he got down to work on it, a health problem hit him and his review had to be postponed, but by March 5, he reported he had almost finished, and it was mailed to the office for final typing a few days later. Throughout 1979 there were phone calls and letters back and forth asking for final clarifications, spellings, and pictures, which now in retrospect I realize must have challenged the patience of the "ramrodder." However, what emerged is an informative, straightforward, no-nonsense interview. Mr. Jorgensen died on May 14, 1980.

Amelia R. Fry
Interviewer-Editor

10 November 1980
Washington, D.C.

NIXON CHRONOLOGY, 1946, WITH JORGENSEN'S COMMENTS

late spring, 1945	Initial, preliminary meeting of the fact finding committee, at Eaton's restaurant, Arcadia, Ca. (Mazo and Hess, 36) Paul Bullock thinks this meeting was early August.
August, 1945	Notices appeared in newspapers in Twelfth Congressional District that the fact finding committee was looking for a candidate. (de Toledano, 39; Lurie, 45; Costello, 38)
September, 1945	Herman Perry letter to Richard Nixon asking if he would be interested in being a candidate for Congress. (RN autobiography, 34) And responds affirmatively. (RN 34)
September 29, 1945	Whittier meeting of fact finding committee at William Penn Hotel. (Costello, 40; Lurie, 46; and Mankiewicz, 49 say Nixon was there. Nixon in the autobiography does not mention being there.)
October 2, 1945	Nixon letter to Perry. Date supplied by Nixon researcher K.L. Khachijian in letter 12/29/78
October 3, 1945	Perry to Day letter, suggesting RN as candidate. (ROHO o.h. with Day, 30)
October 8, 1945	Dexter telegram to Day, saying he had not ruled out running (Day correspondence)
October 13, 1945	Day to Dexter letter suggesting he, Dexter, consider running and asking for comments on RN and other possible choices. (Day corresp.)

November 2, 1945	Nixon flies to California; Appears at meeting in Whittier with six prospective candidates. (Day correspondence; Barnes o.h., p. 91; RN autobiography, 35)
November 28, 1945	Alhambra meeting of Committee of 100 at which Nixon is selected. (Roy Day correspondence; Chotiner news release)
November 29, 1945	Day calls Nixon to tell him he was chosen.
December 4, 1945	Nixon accepts committee endorsement in letter to Roy Day (Mazo, RN, 44; Bullock says public announcement was December 21, 1945)
January, 1946	Nixon leaves the navy.
February 12, 1946	Formal announcement of Nixon's candidacy, kickoff of primary campaign at Pomona Lincoln's Day Dinner.
post-primary	General election campaign kickoff at Eaton's; Stanley Barnes presided.

There was a University Club meeting of the fact finding committee of one of the Whittier meetings. I think this was either September 29, 1945 or November 2, 1945. We haven't really established if RN was even in California on September 29, 1945, so the likelihood is that this date was the latter one.

I THE 1946 CAMPAIGN: JERRY VOORHIS IS UNSEATED

[Interview 1: April 1, 1975]
[begin tape 1, side 1]

Jorgensen Enters Politics: the San Marino School Board Race

Jorgensen: Mrs. Fry, you tell me that you want to talk about the very early days of what I call the Nixon saga or the rise of a young man who later became president. I shall do so, as much as my memory will recall. Likewise, please ask me questions as we go along. I may refer to some material I have here that might be useful.

Basically, in the early part of 1945 we had, in what was then the old Twelfth Congressional District, a congressman who had been registered as a Socialist until 1932 and changed his registration to Democratic to go along with Roosevelt. This was Jerry Voorhis, who came from a fine family in Pasadena who, I believe, were staunch Republicans. But Jerry was one of those new thinkers and was what we consider to be not a good representative for at least the conservative element in the Twelfth Congressional District.

You will remember that the Twelfth in those days represented South Pasadena, San Marino, Alhambra, and went out east to the [Los Angeles] County line, which encompassed Whittier and Pomona. The registration as I recall in those days was close to fifty-fifty Republican and Democrat.

I lived in San Marino, which was a bedroom community for Los Angeles and which contained a lot of young, energetic businessmen. None of us up to this date, who were concerned with what later developed, were politicians. I suppose I came into the picture because I had been successful in championing and campaigning for a school board member in San Marino in a write-in campaign, and we won. So they said I was a politician and turned to me to get something started.

Fry: That's pretty good practice usually. Those local school board elections can provide good training grounds.

Jorgensen: The school board members were people who were fine gentlemen, but we didn't think they were paying enough attention to the education that the children were getting. They were spending most of their effort on the equipment and the real estate of the schools rather than what the teachers were doing.

Fry: Was this a recall election?

Jorgensen: No. In San Marino in those days they had a school election, but if there was going to be a change in the school board, usually the board would accept the resignation and appoint a new member prior to the election. We decided that we would run a man by the name of Maurice Jones, who was a young attorney very much interested in the civic welfare of San Marino. It was too late to file, so we had to run a write-in campaign. It was a lot of fun. Some of the time old friends wouldn't speak to Mrs. Jorgensen and me as we went down the street. But it all washed out in the end. Everything worked out fine. As a matter of fact, Jones served on the school board for quite a number of years, later became mayor of San Marino, and has devoted a good share of his life to the community. So our selection, I think, was all right.

Anyhow, this led to our thinking, "Why are we having a congressman who had been a Socialist, and now a Democrat in the Roosevelt image, representing us?" So we started moving around and talking. Seemingly the same thing was going on in other parts of the district, although we were not aware of it.

Election to L.A. County Republican Central Committee

Jorgensen: But we young bucks came in and got busy. We talked to the leaders of the [Los Angeles County Republican] Central Committee, of which I became a member in the spring of 1945, in the Fifty-third Assembly District, of which San Marino was a part.

Fry: Sometime in your narration I would like for you to explain the relationship between the going Republican organization and the move to unseat Voorhis. You said that in the meantime you became a member of the county central committee.

Jorgensen: That's right. I will. Remind me of it, please, because I have some pertinent remarks to make about it. I might as well make them now.

When I got on the central committee, I took McIntyre Faries's position on the committee. Mac became national committeeman, so he stepped off of the committee and they nominated me. There's a rather funny story behind that. I can tell it now. I was afraid it would get out over the years. I'm diverting here. Is that all right if I wander around?

Fry: That's marvelous, yes. One nice thing is that you'll have a transcript, and we can cut out things and put them back where they belong, if you wish.

Jorgensen: Okay. I had lived in San Francisco before moving to San Marino in 1938. While I was in San Francisco I knew Jim Rolph, Jr., who then became governor [1931-1934], and I know his son [James Rolph, III] quite well. His son--I can't give you the year, but it was some time in there, the early thirties--decided he'd run for state office. I think it was lieutenant governor. I'm not sure.

Fry: It wasn't governor?

Jorgensen: No. I think it was lieutenant governor or one of the state offices. But he was running on the Progressive ticket. I had voted and registered as a Republican ever since I was eligible to do so. But young Jim asked me, "Would you mind changing your registration so that you can vote for me in the primary? I need votes." So I changed my registration to Progressive. It didn't make a lot of difference. I was sure I wasn't going to vote Democrat. I didn't care for Roosevelt, I distrusted him.

So, as Roosevelt's stature grew and he became king, practically speaking, I thought to myself, "Why not just let that Progressive registration stay there, and then if they shoot off all the Republicans in the country, at least we Progressives may be able to live."

Anyhow, I went to the central committee meeting, not expecting to be elected a member. And I was made a member--right now! So the next morning I went down to the registrar's office and changed my registration [laughing], as quick as I could, back to Republican.

Fry: [laughter] Without fanfare.

Jorgensen: Nobody discovered that or ever used it against me.

Origins of the Committee of One Hundred: the Eaton Meeting

Jorgensen: I observed that the central committee of the twelfth district was far from energetic. They had given up because of the fact that Voorhis had been in Congress for two, maybe three terms--two terms at least--and that he was unbeatable. Some of us young men and women who didn't have much experience thought, "This can't be. You can beat a man if you organize." We said, "Let's get a committee together to select a candidate. Let's see who wants to run for Congress."

I believe Roy Day at the time was chairman of the [Twelfth] Congressional District [Central Committee], which encompassed three of the assembly districts. A meeting was set up at Eaton's in Arcadia. I've been trying to ascertain that date.

Fry: We may have that date.*

Jorgensen: That's good. I want it before you leave because it'll fill in. That meeting was ostensibly under the central committee, but in reality it was run by concerned citizens.

Before this Eaton's meeting we had gone to the newspapers in the district and said, "Anybody that is interested in becoming a candidate for Congress, come on and meet the committee." The committee was loosely put together. What we tried to do was to get the Republican leaders and the presidents of the women's clubs, the presidents of the Republican clubs in the communities like Whittier, the pro-Americans, anybody that was interested. We said, "Send representatives to this meeting." They paid their own dinner. It wasn't financed. I remember I sat in the back of the room counting the money, hoping we'd have enough to pay for the dinner. There was a good turnout, and Stanley Barnes acted as chairman for the evening.

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*This meeting took place sometime between late spring and mid summer, 1945. See: Earl Mayo and Stephen Hess, Nixon, A Political Portrait (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 36; Paul Bullock, Jerry Voorhis, The Idealist as Politician (New York: Vantage, 1978).

Jorgensen: We young men and women from San Marino and some other places were sitting in the back of the room observing. There were candidates who presented themselves. But so help me, Hannah, we said, "My God, if this is all we can get to run for Congress, let's don't waste our time." They just weren't the kind of people we were looking for. They were looking for a job.

As a matter of fact, in a little cocktail party we had one night we were trying to figure out what we would like to have in a candidate. We said, "Now, what do we want? Well, we want a fairly young man. We want a young man that has an excellent education--college or university. We want a young man who has demonstrated a forensic ability, the ability to get on his feet in front of an audience. We'd like to have a young man who has a service record--been in the army or navy or air force. We want this young man to be married and living with his wife, and we'd like to have some young children. If we could find this individual we think this man would be our candidate if he's a good Republican and thinks, as we do, that things are getting a little crazy. We don't care for what Roosevelt is doing."

So, out of this meeting came nothing, really. None of the potential candidates we had were suitable. And so, afterwards we got together in a little group and said, "By golly, we gotta go find a candidate! We've got to sell somebody on the idea of running for Congress. We can't just take these people who are looking for jobs. In the first place, they haven't got the qualifications and the ability to do the thing we want."

Fry: Nixon didn't show up at Eaton's?

Jorgensen: Oh no. Nixon was not in the picture at this time at all. I think that Eaton meeting was in the spring of '45. Do you recall?

Fry: We haven't been able to tie down that chronology yet.

Jorgensen: I want that date because I've had a big argument about it.

Fry: I have Judge Stanley Barnes's notes and program that he jotted down at some meeting, I think a kick-off for Nixon's campaign.*

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*See interview with Stanley Barnes in: Earl Warren's Campaigns, Volume I, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1976, pp. 40-41.

Jorgensen: I would be very interested to review that if you'd let me see it. If you would I'd enjoy it, because Stan has always been a warm friend of mine. I've always thought well of him. He's done a fine job and is a man who had great character.

But no, Nixon was not in the picture at the time of the first meeting. Nixon didn't enter the picture for us until later in the year when we were looking for this man. Nixon's name was not in that meeting, if my memory is correct.

Fry: Did he send a record to be played there?

Jorgensen: Not at that meeting.

Fry: That must have happened at a later one then.

Jorgensen: As a result of the Eaton meeting in the spring there was a so-called committee, and some people referred to it as the Committee of One Hundred. It was pretty loosely put together. In each of the assembly districts there were meetings of the members of that so-called committee of one hundred, who were looking at candidates. I think Whittier had one or two such meetings. I believe there was a meeting out in the east end there, where Roy Day lived, in Pomona. [Pause] Excuse me, Mrs. Fry. As I get older, I have a little trouble on recall. I think there was probably one held in the Twelfth District. I can't remember exactly.

A Visit to Whittier

Jorgensen: After the Eaton meeting these young concerned voters got busy. And now I lead you to Whittier. We started kind of moving around and as a result we got acquainted with the people over at Whittier who were, for the largest part, a fairly conservative group of Quakers.

Fry: Before you went to Whittier did you have any candidate in mind?

Jorgensen: No, none whatsoever. As a result of getting acquainted with Herman Perry and Harold Lutz over in Whittier, a suggestion was made that we might get Walter Dexter (who I believe had been previously the president of Whittier College when Dick Nixon was a student there) to run for Congress. Dexter at this time was the superintendent of education--I think that's the correct title--for the state of California.

Jorgensen: A letter was written to Mr. Dexter by Herman Perry, manager of the Whittier Bank of America, asking Dexter if he wanted to run for Congress. Perry later made a telephone call to Dexter. At least this is the history of the thing. Dexter said he might be interested in running for Congress, but he would have to be assured of a job equal to what he had in income, which I think was around $10,500 a year at that time, if he lost the election. Obviously none of us could guarantee such a thing.

In the course of the conversation he raised the name of a student that he'd had in school by the name of Richard Milhous Nixon.

Fry: Did he give you reasons why he thought of Nixon?

Jorgensen: Dexter said he was a brilliant student who had earned his scholarship to Duke University to earn his law degree. He graduated in law from Duke on a scholarship that he'd earned at Whittier. Dexter said that this man had evidence, in his opinion, some interest in political endeavor.

We then checked with Herman Perry, who referred us to Tom Brewley of the firm of Bewley, Knopp and Nixon. We found that Dick Nixon had been, I believe, an assistant to the city attorney's office prior to his leaving to go into the navy and into the war.

I recall Boyd Gibbons, Rocky [Rockwood] Nelson, and myself, when the name came to us, making a visit to Whittier. We went down to the small crossroads store that Nixon's parents and brother were operating. We talked to them and then went back up into the town of Whittier and went up to see Tom Bewley.

Fry: Did you meet his father and mother?

Jorgensen: Yes.

Fry: Did you tell them what you had in mind?

Jorgensen: Yes. We indicated that we were trying to find out something about their son, as to whether he could be a candidate.

Fry: What did you think of his parents?

Jorgensen: I was very much interested in them, particularly his mother. She looked to me like a strong woman. I well remember the mother, Hannah. She was quite a down-to-earth person, and she knew what she was doing. She had raised these boys of hers and there were three or four of them as I recall. One of them died, I think, in Arizona History tells you that.

The Committee Selects A Candidate

Jorgensen: There's disagreement as to a phone call supposedly made to Nixon. For instance, it's supposed to have been made from my home; it was not. Boyd Gibbons has maintained that he called Nixon, and I don't want to dispute him on that. He may have later. But the original approach to Nixon was made by Herman Perry. I have a copy of that letter somewhere in my file, asking if he'd be interested.

Fry: Perry first wrote him then?

Jorgensen: Yes. Nixon at that time was still in the navy. He was back in Baltimore doing some renegotiation with the Martin Aircraft people. As I recall he then came back--and he may have come back in a telephone call--and said, "Yes, I'm interested. If you fellows out there think you can put on a campaign, I'd like to come out."

We said, "Can you get out?"

He said, "Sure." As I recall he came out on a service plane, but it may be that he paid his own fare. I don't know.

The first time I saw Dick Nixon personally was at the University Club in Los Angeles. There was a meeting, and here again I haven't been able to tie the date down. I'm working on it. Somebody will remember it. I've gone to the records of the club, but we don't have it.

We had a small dining room--small room. At this meeting I recall there was myself and--I believe Earl Adams was there. I think Swede [Willard J.] Larsen was there. I'm not sure whether Herman Perry was there or not, but there was somebody from Whittier there. Boyd Gibbons was there. Rockwood Nelson was there. I think that's just about the group. Nixon was in his naval uniform. He was then, I believe, a lieutenant commander if I'm not mistaken. We liked what we heard from this young fellow. We talked with him very bluntly and very frankly.

Fry: Was this just an evening meeting?

Jorgensen: No, it was a luncheon meeting. Gerald Keppel, who was associated with the local telephone company in Whittier, might have been at this meeting for Whittier. I think I remember that Keppel took Nixon back to Whittier. That night in Whittier they had a meeting of the members of the so-called fact finding committee

Jorgensen: or the candidate committee. Then Nixon may have visited over around in the Pomona district. I'm not sure. But very shortly afterwards he went back to Washington.

Fry: Was the main question in Nixon's mind at this point one of whether you would have funds to run the campaign?

Jorgensen: Yes, very much so. He said, "Can you fellows--?"

We said, "Well, we don't know a hell of a lot about this thing, but we'll work our tails off." Herman Perry had some experience in campaigns. Roy Day had had some locally. The rest of us were all newcomers.

We didn't know top from bottom how to run a campaign, except that we were businessmen and we knew how to sell. We took the position that a political campaign was nothing more than selling a product--you got a candidate; if that's your product, how're you going to sell it? Are you going to sell him by television, or are you going to sell him by radio? Television wasn't there then much, if any, but there was radio, newspaper, and personal appearance. We knew that. We had some advertising people. I was in the insurance business and knew how to mass sell and so forth. So we thought we could do it. We didn't know how much money we were going to have to use. We had no idea. We had no funds. There hadn't been any funds raised.

The last meeting of the so-called committee was called in Alhambra. It was held at the Elks Club in Alhambra November 28, 1945. This I didn't attend. I had to go to the meeting of my company, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, in New York at the time. This is really where the Nixon picture was presented, although prior to this he had appeared at a meeting in Whittier. That night they voted on who they wanted as a candidate. In the meantime a lot of work had been done for Dick Nixon. He'd met some people and he was out in California. On the first ballot--somewhere we have the record here--he was the leader. There was a couple of other candidates. Dr. Spenser in Alhambra was one of them. There was a retired army man in Pomona which had some votes. But in the end, it wound up--I think on the second or third ballot--unanimous for Nixon. So he was advised that he was the candidate. That's the end of the fact finding committee in the 1946 election.

Herman Perry

Jorgensen: So, Nixon said, "All right. I can get a release from the navy, and you fellows go ahead." So, as I recall, we appointed Roy Day as the campaign manager for the primary. We opened a headquarters over in Whittier. Uncle Perry--I called him Uncle Herman Perry. He was really the political godfather of this young Nixon.

Fry: Can you describe "Uncle Herman"?

Jorgensen: I'm coming to something that will describe him. I remember when he met me it was arm's length. He was a true, shrewd banker, and he tested me a few times. Finally he came around to where we were very warm friends. I could feel that during campaigns later on. I'd call Uncle Herman and say, "Uncle Herman, I'm in trouble!" [using a western accent] "How much do you need, you darn fool? I know you wouldn't call me without you wanted money!" [laughter] And he'd always get it.

As a matter of fact when he passed away his son called me and said, "Dad would want you very much to be one of the pallbearers. He thought so much of you." I was very pleased to do it. I was very fond of him.

Dick Nixon in the navy, not making very much money. Pat Nixon had been working and they'd saved some money, but not a lot. Uncle Herman got them a little house in Whittier, and they scraped together what they could. I remember being in that house, and it was pretty thinly furnished. There wasn't a lot of furniture, and it wasn't a big house by any means.

But Dick and Pat were willing to throw all the dollars they had--I think there was probably not more than $2,500, $3,500 total--I think they spent every dime of it in the campaign to help us.

Campaign Finance

Jorgensen: Dick came out and we started campaigning--setting up meetings and getting the newspaper support that we could. We had no idea exactly how much it was going to cost. But we sat down and tried to figure it out, and we started to raise money. I set up an operation. I say I set it up because Dick more or less turned to me to do what I call "ramrod" a campaign.

Jorgensen: That is to see that the money is there and to see that it's spent correctly, that it's handled correctly, and to pick up all the odds and ends.

We didn't have a chairman in that campaign. Roy Day was the campaign manager to arrange meetings and, as a campaign manager should, arrange advertising and so forth. In those days you could get a lot of free help in your advertising. You didn't have to pay for people to make up your newspaper advertising. You had to pay for the insertion of it, of course, but advertising men helped us.

In the financial end I asked Arthur Kruse in Alhambra, who was the head of a building and loan organization, to act as treasurer. I insisted that we have a committee of five, and that no expenditure be made by anyone, including the candidate, until at least three of the committee had signed on.

Fry: This was your finance committee.

Jorgensen: This was the finance committee. The finance committee, as I recall, was made up of Kruse, Perry, myself, and--I can't think of the other two at the moment. (I'll think of the other two before we get through with this.) So we then started to raise money. It came in small amounts. I had my office down on Spring Street in Los Angeles. It got so that my San Marino friends would see me coming and go on the other side of the street, because they knew I was going to have my hand in their pocket for $15 or $20 for the campaign. [Laughter]

I do recall that we'd run fairly close. Uncle Herman raised some money over in Whittier. There was some money raised out in Pomona. But San Marino was supposedly the rich village in the district. The money wasn't coming in as fast as it should, and it wasn't coming in as I was to know in later campaigns, in larger amounts. When we got a $10 or $20 contribution we thought we were doing very well.

I remember my wife, Mary, and I over a weekend put out three thousand letters in San Marino. She typed the salutation, the name of the person, because I had the letters done by the San Marino Tribune, and I paid for them. Our heading was, "Have you had enough?" That was the slogan in those days. We worked over a weekend and mailed those to all the San Marino residents. I think that three thousand mailing brought in probably about $5,000 in total. It was hard going, but we raised the money, and as I say, Dick and Pat put in what they could. We all worked hard.

Jorgensen: The campaign was one which Dick won by a margin of about seven thousand votes, if my memory serves me right.* You will recall in that Congress we had a swing. Harry Truman had become president, and there was a swing. A Republican House was elected that year.

Fry: Right. The Eightieth.

Jorgensen: So we were the beneficiary of that. But our margin of victory was not too broad.

Analyzing Nixon's Win: Anti-Communism and the Debates

Fry: What do you think contributed to your victory in the way you ran your campaign?

Jorgensen: I think Nixon caught the imagination of the people. He was a conservative individual. He was anti-Communist, and you remember the Communist issue was quite large in those days. There was a lot of fear of it. Russia under Stalin had just turned back and given us a kick in the rear end, so to speak. A lot of us felt that Roosevelt had veen very soft on Communism. I wouldn't call him a Communist by any means. I think he was befuddled a good deal of the time and fooled by Stalin, no question about it, as the Communists have fooled us year after year since that time.

But Nixon was an attractive candidate. Then Voorhis made the mistake of suggesting that perhaps we ought to have a debate. We accepted the chance to debate because we were convinced that our man on the platform could beat Voorhis. I remember their first meeting. The first meeting was held in the high school auditorium in South Pasadena. Voorhis had

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*Results of the primary were:

Jerry Voorhis	37,264
Richard Nixon	29,474
William J. Kinnett	2,732

Results of the general election were:

Richard Nixon	65,586
Jerry Voorhis	49,994

Jorgensen: received--I feel fairly certain that he didn't solicit it--but he had received the endorsement of the CIO Political Action Committee. This was a little pink in those days. There was some question as to the Communist infiltration.

Fry: I think he had received the endorsement of a committee within the Los Angeles Chapter of the National Citizens Political Action Committee, but not the CIO-PAC. They had turned him down.

Jorgensen: Well, it had the connotation in other words. I remember so well Nixon's position. He was very anti-Communist. There was no question of it; he believed in it. It wasn't just a political thing with him. At this meeting he had the clipping that had come out in the newspaper with this so-called endorsement. I recall that when Nixon was speaking he dwelt on it and he held it out. Voorhis was so wrought that he forgot himself and came halfway across the stage to look at it, then suddenly stopped, realizing that he had made a mistake, and turned around and went back to his seat.

Then we knew that we had pricked his hide, that this bothered him. So naturally that was one of the things that Nixon referred to. All he said was, "Here it is. Make your own judgment. I'm not calling Mr. Voorhis a Communist or anything of the sort, but this is where he's getting his endorsement." Of course, some of his supporters got a little bit hysterical about it.

Fry: What do you mean?

Jorgensen: Well, in the district. The district supporters of Voorhis got pretty hysterical about this endorsement and about Nixon raising it. They protested that Voorhis wasn't.

It's like a husband who gets caught out, and he makes a big mistake by protesting, "No, it wasn't me." He'd probably be better off to say to his wife, "Honey, I'm sorry. The moon was right. I won't do it again, I promise you." She'd probably forgive him. She'd never let him <u>forget</u> it. She'd never let him forget it; that's for sure.

Anyhow, it played a part. It played a part.

Fry: I wondered if--when you said they got hysterical--if any of Voorhis's old supporters changed over to Nixon at that point.

Jorgensen: I think probably some of them did. I don't know how much. As I say, we only won that election by I think around seven thousand votes in that district.

Fry: Was that much of a percentage? It sounds like a lot for one district.

Jorgensen: Mrs. Fry, I don't know. You'll have to go back in the records to see what the registration was at that time.

Fry: Okay, we can get that information somewhere else. But it was decisive at any rate.

Jorgensen: Yes, it was a decisive victory. It wasn't a landslide by any means, but it was decisive. I think that some of the people had voted for Voorhis because Voorhis himself, as an individual, was very much a gentleman. There wasn't any question about the man. He just was one of those thinkers who--I think at one time he said, "If the country runs out of money, let's print more." This sort of thing. He was a great man for cooperatives and he was a great man to tax. He just didn't think the way we did, and so the people in the district said to themselves, "Maybe it is time for a change. We've had enough of this. Let's try this new young fellow." And Nixon was elected.

Roy Day, Harrison McCall, and Murray Chotiner

Jorgensen: During this 1946 campaign at the end of the primary, Roy Day had to step out as the campaign chairman simply because it had taken too much of his time. We asked an old friend of ours over in South Pasadena, Harrison McCall, to become campaign manager for the general election.

Fry: Who was he?

Jorgensen: Harrison was a businessman in Los Angeles. He had a testing laboratory where they tested concrete and that sort of thing for buildings.

Fry: Oh--engineering?

Jorgensen: Engineering. Harrison, though, had always been interested in politics. He passed away about two or three years ago, up in his eighties. He was a wise man, and he knew the district pretty well. He was smooth. You never got Harrison concerned. So I said to Harrison, "We need a campaign manager. Can you take on the job?"

Jorgensen: He kind of spoke in a high voice, and he said [imitating voice], "Well, I guess maybe I could. I like Nixon very much."

I said, "Now, we can't pay you very much."

He said, "Well, do what you can."

I said, "If we have enough money, we will pay you $500 for the whole campaign." [laughter] And that's what we did--that's what he received for the whole primary campaign. And Harrison worked very hard. But he had a good rapport with the newspapers and reporters.

There has been some talk about Murray Chotiner in this early campaign.

Fry: I wanted to ask you--was he in it or not?

Jorgensen: No. Murray and I were members of the Los Angeles County Central Committee. I later became chairman of the Los Angeles County Central Committee. Murray at that time was a smart young politician who had participated in some statewide campaigns and was on the central committee. We would turn to Murray when we needed some political advice and counsel, but Murray was not a part of the 1946 Nixon campaign. I'll tell you where he comes into the picture later.

Fry: I was trying to remember what Roy Day told me about Chotiner, because he does give him a role in the campaign.

Jorgensen: Not in the '46 campaign. I don't think so.

Fry: But, in other words, he was there to help you when you needed advice on campaign methods and tactics and things like that.

Jorgensen: Yes. He may have come out to one of our meetings and given us some counsel and advice, but to the best of my knowledge he was not an active member of that 1946 campaign.

II RICHARD NIXON'S RE-ELECTION TO CONGRESS, 1948

The Central Role of the Primary

Jorgensen: In 1948 Nixon more or less turned to me to get things done in the district. I had become the chairman of the central committee for the Fifty-third Assembly District. In the '48 campaign, we set up headquarters in El Monte, as I recall. Nixon cross-filed and won both tickets.

Fry: I have quite a few questions here on '48. Who else was in the primary against Nixon? Do you remember? I have Steven Zetterberg and a Mrs. Porter. I couldn't tell from reading these minutes of a March 30 meeting of your committee whether she was a Democrat. Maybe she was from the Independent-Progressive party.

Jorgensen: By George, I can't remember. I remember the name Zetterberg.

Fry: I suppose she'll be on the ballot, if we can get ahold of a county ballot. Steve Zetterberg was an attorney.

Jorgensen: It didn't amount to anything. There was really no opposition.

Fry: The vote between Zetterberg and the Independent-Progressive party candidate split.

Jorgensen: Yes. It didn't amount to anything.

Fry: Did you start out in that campaign going for victory in the primary?

Jorgensen: Yes. You see, by this time Nixon's star was starting to rise in the sky because the Alger Hiss matter had come before the House Un-American Activities Committee. Nixon at that time was

Jorgensen: nationally known. He had represented his district, and he'd pleased the people. We thought there was a pretty good chance that he could win both nominations in the primary.

My position on this tactic was that it would save money. In those days of cross-filing if you could get your man elected in the primary, you saved yourself a few thousand dollars because you didn't really have to run a general election. You could make a few speeches and you could have a few newspaper ads, but you could save quite a few thousand dollars in the congressional race. I was always thinking of dollars as well as the candidate, because it was usually my job to scurry around and get the dollars together. Anyhow, we re-elected our candidate very handily in the primary of this '48 campaign.

South Pasadena Opposition: 1948 and 1950

Fry: Could I ask you just a few questions about your March 30, [1948] organization meeting. There was a group with four initials that were opposing Nixon in South Pasadena, particularly. Could you tell me about this group?

Jorgensen: You always had a group that wanted, I think probably, to be recognized more than anything else. But they didn't represent very many voters. After Nixon decided to run for the Senate they caused a great deal of trouble in the congressional election of Patrick Hillings for Congress, to replace Nixon.

Fry: What were the characteristics of this group? How was it different from others?

Jorgensen: Well, it's kind of a story. Is this the place to talk about it? I don't mind talking about it. When Mr. Nixon decided to run for the United States Senate, I was chairman of the Twelfth Congressional District at the time. So I put into operation a campaign committee for a congressional candidate and again followed out much of what we did in 1946 by inviting all the representatives of the Republican organizations to become members of the committee. We held our first meeting in--I think it was Arcadia, at which time I was going to formalize the committee, more so than was done in the '46 campaign. Remember, this is 1950.

I recall saying to Nixon, "Will you endorse the candidate that comes out of the committee?"

Jorgensen: He said, "Yes. I came out of such a committee. I don't see anything wrong with the way you people do it. You've got a representative group of people. It's not run by a small group."

I said, "Fine. I've got the original meeting of the committee in Arcadia." I put out a call for them.

[end tape 1, side 1; begin tape 1, side 2]

Fry: As we turned the tape you were putting out a call for the committee.

Jorgensen: "And I would like for you [Nixon] to come to the meeting before the committee is formalized and make any statement that you care to make."

I picked Nixon up at his hotel that evening and drove him out to Arcadia and called the group together in the meeting and said, "Mr. Nixon would like to talk to you before we formalize the committee." He told them of his decision to run for the United States Senate and that he appreciated all the work they had done and would do for him, and that he would endorse the candidate for Congress in the Twelfth Congressional District that was agreed to by this committee.

A subsequent meeting of the committee was held, at which we issued invitations to all people who were interested in running for Congress to appear. We carefully allocated the time for each candidate to speak and present himself or herself. I might interject a personal note here, that it was assumed by some of the newspapers in the district, particularly the San Marino Tribune, that I would be the candidate for the congressional seat.

Fry: Really? Why weren't you?

Jorgensen: As a matter of fact, I gave it considerable thought. But at the beginning of a committee meeting in Alhambra I said, "I will not be a candidate. I don't wish to be a candidate. There is nothing coy about me. This is final, that I will not be a candidate."

My reason for it was simply this. (I'm not sure that I told the committee all of this, other than to tell them that I would not be a candidate.) I didn't think I had the temperament to be a congressman. I enjoyed campaigns. The organization work and the planning and the financing and such like was enjoyable, and I liked to do it. But to be a candidate and to have to appear in meetings--oh, some gal would have a hold

Jorgensen: of my sleeve, I'm afraid, and be hanging on, trying to get my attention, and I'd probably turn around and insult her and tell her to go home and shut up. I just didn't feel that I had the temperament to be a congressman.

There were financial considerations at the time too. As I recall it, I think a congressman was paid $10,500 a year, and in my business I was doing considerably more than that.

Fry: You were in insurance?

Jorgensen: I was in the insurance business, and I didn't want to give that up. I'd spent just under forty years with Metropolitan Life Insurance Company before I retired. I would have given up a lot of things. As a matter of fact, I carried around in my coat pocket a piece of paper. It weighed the decision. I had a line drawn down the middle of it, and I had "do's" and don'ts." The don'ts outweighed the do's, and I never regretted my decision. But I did tell them that I wasn't going to be a candidate. We had a number of candidates, and a number of good ones, people who were in the image of the Nixon picture, energetic, able people.

I forget how many meetings of the committee we held. We held, I think, four. The final meeting was in El Monte, at which we were to ballot and choose a candidate for Congress. As a matter of fact, we had quite a night of it because the rivalry for the position had grown quite intense. In the voting we had a chap by the name of Patrick Hillings, who was a young attorney in Arcadia who associated with William Price in a law firm of Hillings and Price. Hillings was a candidate.

When we started the balloting after dinner in El Monte a schism that had risen, led mainly by this group in South Pasadena who did not care for Pat Hillings too much. Unfortunately, it had undertones of religious misunderstanding.

Hillings was born a Catholic, raised a Catholic. I don't know whether he was practicing his religion to a great extent. But there was a group of Christian Science people principally who took a very dim view of this. They were behind a candidate, a lady in South Pasadena, Helen--very fine person, nice person, and a real campaigner.

So during this El Monte meeting I could see that if I let this meeting break up without coming out with a candidate, the district would be in one hell of a shape. So I kept them there till three o'clock in the morning, until one candidate had a majority. I wasn't concerned who it was. I just kept one ballot rolling after the other.

Jorgensen: Of course, in the beginning there was more than one candidate. But as I recall, Mr. Hillings was always the leading candidate on each ballot. Finally at some time around three o'clock in the morning he got the majority vote. Then it was cast as a unanimous vote, as I recall.

But immediately after that this group decided that they wouldn't support Hillings. They started a campaign of their own and chose a man by the name of Wheeler from the Claremont area, a fine gentleman, as far as I know, and not a very able politician as events proved. I believe he was on the town council or something of that sort. So they started to raise a ruckus.

I took the position that they had given their word in the committee meeting to support Mr. Hillings. They came to me and tried to bring pressure on me, as chairman of the meeting and chairman of the district, to release them of their obligation, which I refused to do. I said, "I can't stop you from what you want to do, but I will not release you, because the committee acted in accordance with the rules, and as far as I'm concerned, Hillings has your endorsement."

Fry: In other words, everyone who had gone to that meeting had gone knowing that they were pledged in some way?

Jorgensen: We said to them that if it was unanimous we expected everybody to support the candidate. "This has been a democratic affair. There hasn't been any logrolling. There hasn't been any cheating, as far as I know. We've tried to give everybody a fair chance. Any candidate--we would give him the same amount of time to present himself." That's the reason I kept them balloting.

Always when I chaired a meeting of this sort I would have a parliamentarian. But that night I decided I had to have three parliamentarians. Earl Adams and two other men acted as parliamentarians. Of course, the people on the floor ask for a ruling, etc. So I would turn and refer to my parliamentarians to give me a ruling on the question. They'd get in such a damn argument [laughing] among themselves. I'd say, "I think I know what you're talking about. Here's how it's ruled. So ordered." [laughter]

Fry: You became your own parliamentarian.

Jorgensen: Well, not really. But you had to keep a meeting like that moving. Otherwise it would bog down and you'd be in terrible shape.

Fry: So there you were, then, caught with these people who were trying to pull out and trying to get your permission to stick to their own candidate.

Jorgensen: They mounted a campaign for Wheeler, and it became pretty rough. Young Hillings--I think Pat was only about twenty-six years old at the time--would come to me and say, "Do I have to take what I'm getting?"

I said, "Sure you do. You're a candidate, and these people have the right to say what they damn well please about you. But you've got some pretty good support too." Anyhow, Hillings was elected. That goes back to the South Pasadena group which, as you mentioned, attended the March 30, 1948 organizational meeting for Nixon's congressional re-election campaign. It was the nucleus that came out in '50.

I recall--and I should not give you names on this because--but one of the leaders of this was Helen Garrison, who lived in South Pasadena.

Fry: Was this '48 you're talking about?

Jorgensen: This is 1950.

Support from Women

Fry: I wanted to ask you about some of the women that were mentioned in '48.

Jorgensen: All right. Go ahead.

Fry: In the minutes, as you go through this meeting you're introducing people. One was Mrs. Noyd who "started the first Nixon committee."

Jorgensen: Helen Noyd. She didn't live in South Pasadena. She lived in Alhambra. She was quite an active person and very positive and fought hard for her position.

Fry: When it says "the first Nixon committee" does this mean the first Nixon women's committee?

Jorgensen: I think so.

Fry: Was she in on this initial group with you?

Jorgensen: She might have been in on the 1946 campaign. She might have been in the women's group. You have committees and you have committees. You don't have a record of all of them. She probably headed up the Alhambra women's committee for Nixon in '46. I suspect that's probably true, because I know she was active.

Fry: Other names that I picked up in '48 were Helen Wysong, head of San Gabriel--

Jorgensen: Yes, a very active person and very much a staunch supporter of Mr. Nixon in all of his endeavors. Helen worked hard for us.

Fry: Cecil Kenyon, San Marino.

Jorgensen: Cecil Kenyon in San Marino was the wife of Spike Kenyon, who was the vice-president of the Southern California Edison Company. Cecil was quite active, as was Spike when he was alive. In later years she headed up the San Marino women's group. Then she went on to higher things. I believe she headed the state Republican women at one time.

Fry: In the March 30, 1948 organizational meeting the ladies' organization of Alhambra was introduced as the largest organization on the West Coast. It would be the largest women's organization, I guess.

Jorgensen: It might have been the largest women's group.

Fry: Of course, everybody was whooping it up in the meeting. I don't know whether they were given to hyperboles, but--

Jorgensen: I don't remember this meeting. I'm quoted in there, but I had so many meetings.

Fry: You gave a very good speech, I thought.

Jorgensen: There were so many meetings in those days that I just couldn't keep track of it. As a matter of fact, in 1952 my then wife kept a record during the campaign, and I averaged being home for dinner two times a week. I was out every night. I was chairman of the Los Angeles County Central Committee. I'd usually have dinner home on Sunday, and generally I'd save Saturday night so we could have something. So, I had a lot of meetings.

Fry: Goodness! The other thing about this meeting was that there was a lot of talk about how the registration had passed the fifty-fifty mark, and now there were more Democrats than

Fry: Republicans, and that therefore you needed to go after those Democratic votes, and every vote for a Democrat counted as two votes. You remember that?

Jorgensen: Sure.

Fry: There was a mailing of a postcard that was sent out to "Fellow Democrats" and to a lot of new people, apparently, in some of the districts.

Jorgensen: We used all those things that you use in a campaign to bring Democrats across with you. Those towns were growing out there, because they were all bedroom towns--South Pasadena, San Marino, Alhambra, El Monte, Whittier, Pomona, Arcadia. They were all growing towns.

Fry: There were some groups too that we don't have anymore today that I wanted to ask you about. There was the Pro-America, which you mentioned a while ago in the '46 campaign. What was their ideology? Were they to the right or the left of the regular Republicans?

Jorgensen: Pro-America, I would say, in that area were conservative. I think you'd find Pro-America mostly Republican in all that district.

Fry: I see. Their name, Pro-America, does that mean they were the leading edge in the anti-Communist groups, or what was the purpose of their organization?

Jorgensen: Pro-America, as I know it, was primarily an organization that was to the conservative side. They were anti-Communist, of course. There's no question about that. The strength of their organization, by and large, was localized, I think. In Southern California in those days they were a fairly good group. They were a strong group. For instance, in San Marino I think they were a very ineffective group. That is, the group doesn't have a large membership and it doesn't exert itself. But in Southern California when we entered the campaigns, Pro-America was always a good organization to supply us with a lot of good workers, women who would really work.

Fry: It was a woman's organization?

Jorgensen: Pro-America was purely a woman's organization. It still is, as far as I know.

Fry: They would choose candidates?

Jorgensen: They would endorse candidates.

Fry: It was represented by Eunice Lowell.

Jorgensen: Great gal, Eunice Lowell. She was a hard working individual, good organizer, fine person. I remember her very well.

Fry: Then there was another interesting thing in that March 30 meeting when Mr. McLaughlin (and I don't know his first name) was introduced as the fellow who "turned the tide." He got a big cheer. What does that mean?

Jorgensen: Roy McLaughlin. Roy had run in that district for Congress on at least one occasion, maybe two, and Voorhis beat him. But Roy set himself up as the senior statesman of the district. A nice enough person, but really when it was all said and done, we younger man would say, "That's okay, Roy. Good, glad to hear it." And we went about our business and got things done. He was a fine gentleman.

Fry: So this business of him turning the tide, then, was a kind of polite gesture.

Jorgensen: Patting him on the back for "turning the tide." Mr. Nixon turned the tide.

Fry: I see. I thought maybe I'd missed something there. [laughter] Now, there's an Ed Collier who was in South Pasadena. Was he in this group that you told me about that was a maverick group?

Jorgensen: No. Ed Collier, was it?

Fry: That's what it says. Ed Collier was introduced as the South Pasadena chairman.

Jorgensen: There was a Collier who was an assemblyman from that section, but I didn't think it was Ed. Collier was an assemblyman. There may have been another Collier. I didn't think his name was Ed. But the Collier name is familiar in South Pasadena politics.

Comments on Billboards and Cross-filing

Fry: You mentioned in your pitch for money at this meeting how expensive it is to have billboards and that you had already signed up for billboards [laughing]. I wondered how important billboards were then as something you chose for your selling technique.

Jorgensen: Back in the days before television billboards were important to get the image of the individual. You usually had the candidate's picture on the board if he was a good looking candidate and you had a good picture of him. Here again, you come into the advertising end of a campaign. You've got an article to sell. Let people see him; let them know him. And so you use a billboard to constantly project his image--his face if he's got a good face.

God, you work over the statements that go on those billboards by the hour. You fight it and your work it--your advertising people. You're trying to get something that every time that fellow drives down the road he sees that, and it imprints and imprints. So when he goes to the ballot box, he's got it.

Now in some instances if you're running an incumbent, you don't use his picture, but you use your billboard for the message--elect Bill Jones; he's done a great job for you.

Fry: Re-elect your congressman?

Jorgensen: Re-elect your congressman. Of course, there isn't any question about it. In California over the years the Republican party has been a minority party for quite some years. Cross-filing, of course, was always in favor of the Republicans because you had name familiarity, he was an incumbent, and so forth.

I remember when it came up in Sacramento. The first move was made to identify the individual. You didn't have to identify on your filing. You could just say "incumbent." The first move was to say "Republican" or "Democrat." I was chairman of the Los Angeles [County Central Committee], and "Lock" [Laughlin] Waters was heading up the committee considering cross-filing. I said, "Don't change it! We're going to get beat on cross-filing. Hang to it as long as you can because it's in favor of the Republicans to have cross-filing." (Of course, that had been put in by [Hiram] Johnson to break the back of Southern Pacific's control of politics, so history tells me; I wasn't here at the time.) But the committee didn't, and so as a result the cross-filing went out the window.

Democrats for Nixon

Fry: There were a number of Democrats of a conservative nature who did organize for you in 1948 apparently. Here are the names I have. I think it's Albert--but I'm not sure--Hoberg from Alhambra, and Don Fantz. Then the man who signed this postcard that was sent out to fellow Democrats was J.R. Blue. Did you know any of those?

Jorgensen: Yes, I knew them.

Fry: Were you the one who tried to bring in some of the Democrats?

Jorgensen: Yes! Of course, I did. You got your man introduced to leading Democrats, select people who other people in the area respected.

Fry: Who had contacts with them.

Jorgensen: And respected their opinion, who had appeared in public, who had appeared in the press, so that your man had name familiarity.

Fry: Who were they?

Jorgensen: I can't remember. We tried to organize a Democratic committee, a Democratic Committe For. You always do that in a campaign. Sometimes it's paper, but most of the time it's headed up by people--I remember when Nixon was running for the United States Senate. My heavens, we worked hard to get a Democratic listing for him.

Fry: You had to have it because the registration statistics were heavily Democratic.

I still have one more question. There was a man in 1948 called Mr. Arnold whose approval the newspaper ads had to meet. I had the impression that maybe Nixon stayed in Washington the whole time in '48 and never could get home. Did he ever appear?

Jorgensen: In the primary but not in the general election.

Fry: In the primary he did come to California? In this March 30 meeting they kept saying that you pretty much had to run that yourselves because the candidate was pretty busy in Congress.

Jorgensen: He was up to his ears in this Hiss situation. It seems to me Bill Arnold was a secretary to Nixon. He was in the campaign, but he never was a heavyweight. I believe he was a secretary to Nixon at one time. I think that's where he came into the picture.

Fry: It sounded that way. Maybe he was an administrative assistant. Was he in the local office, do you think?

Jorgensen: No, I think Arnold was back in Washington and came out. He came to the district. I don't know how. I don't have much memory of it. He didn't stick around very long. We didn't have much to do with him. I didn't think much of him, as I recall.

Fry: But apparently all the newspaper ads had to get his approval.

Jorgensen: Well, he was representing Nixon. He felt, I suppose, at that time that Nixon should have somebody review them. That's my answer to that.

Fry: What about billboards and handouts and things like that? Did you have to wait for Nixon's approval to come from Washington on those, or how did you do it?

Jorgensen: That wasn't difficult. We'd always consult him, of course; he was the candidate. We'd design stuff and send it along to him, get his approval of it, surely. He was a pretty wise politician, you know.

Nixon and Patronage

Jorgensen: As a matter of fact, Mr. Nixon always had full control of his campaign. He was rather an interesting individual to work with over the years. You see, in those years I was rather close with him and saw him a great deal. I'll tell you more about him when we get into the senatorial campaign. But in the final analysis, he'd listen to you. You could discuss anything you wanted to with him. He'd listen to you; he might ask some questions. But you didn't always know the decision right away, because he liked to take that yellow pad of paper (like you've got there), put down the do's and the don'ts, and make his decision.

I look back now over the years and I understand some things better about him than I did in those years, in the subsequent events that have happened. He was not a man that you asked a favor of. I never asked any favors of Dick Nixon, never, even after he became Senator, during the days of Congress.

Jorgensen: I had people come to me, knowing my close association with him, and also being the chairman of the Los Angeles County Central Committee, wanting this or that or the other thing. You always get that, of course. On most of the things that they ask for, you try to help them.

I recall during the war many fathers and mothers coming to me and saying, "My son is in school and I don't want him to go in the army."

I said, "That's not my province." I remember one case of a man whose son I knew. He was a brilliant boy who was in the university. The army drafted him, and he only had about sixty days to go to get his degree.

His father said, "My gosh, if they take him in the army, he'll never come back and get that degree. Can you postpone? The boy will go in the army. He'll enlist, as a matter of fact. That's not the question. He wants to get his degree before he goes in the army. Can't you go to Nixon?"

I said, "No. I won't go to Nixon, but I'll go to a friend of mine in Congress who is on the armed forces committee and give him the story."

I called him. It was Carl Henshaw, who was a congressman from the Pasadena area. I said, "Carl, is there anything to be done for the young fellow? He'll enlist. He'll go down and enlist right away if you let him have sixty days to get his degree."

In a matter of hours he came back and Carl said, "He's back in school."

But, I would never ask Nixon for a favor. He was not the person that would give favors. I didn't want to be refused, so I never asked him.

Fry: Why wouldn't he give favors for his constituents? Most congressmen kind of exist on that for their support in between elections.

Jorgensen: Well, that was a facet of him. I saw him do things for people that I would not think that he would. Then I saw him on occasion when I suggested he do something and he wouldn't do it.

Fry: Was this a distinction between favors that were of a kind of errand-boy variety, as opposed to favors that could really accomplish something?

Jorgensen: I recall one incident, for instance, after he became Senator. Uncle Herman Perry, whom we've talked about and were so fond of, and who I say was his godfather, was retiring from the bank [Bank of America]. I said to Herman one day, "Would you like to hold public office for a while? He said, "Well, Frank, yes, if I could do anything."

I said, "How would you like to be collector of customs in the Los Angeles Port?"

"By golly," he said, "I'd like that. But I'll tell you now, if I get the appointment and you find somebody else that you want to have it, just tell me and I'll step out."

So I wrote a letter to Nixon suggesting Uncle Herman. I was going back to Washington and so I said, "What'll we do about it? Are you going to do anything about Uncle Herman?"

"Well," he said, "Bill Knowland has the patronage throughout the state of California." Bill then was senior Senator. He said, "Why don't you talk to Bill about it?"

I said, "I will if you want me to."

I dropped into Bill's office. He said, "The only letter I got is the one you wrote to Dick, as far as Perry's concerned, and I got a bunch of letters over here for"--another man. I can't even remember his name, a congressman out in Santa Monica.

I said, "Hell, Bill, if you want letters, I'll get a stack this high. [gesture] Didn't Dick tell you that he'd like to have him?"

He said, "No, it was up to me."

I said, "Forget it."

Now, here was a very dear old friend of his. This appointment was of no great consequence--the career people do the work--and I thought it would be nice for Uncle Herman to have a job, to go out and say, "Well, I was a collector of customs for a year." Anyhow, that was a facet that I watched.

Still, on the other hand, I saw in a couple of incidents, people who'd really done him some harm, and they got into messes and he was trying to get them out. He's a complex fellow.

Fry: I'm still trying to get at the distinction of people he would help and people he wouldn't help.

Jorgensen: There wasn't really a distinction that I knew of.

Fry: No underlying pattern.

Jorgensen: No pattern at all.

Early Supporters and Associates

Jorgensen: These pictures up here that you're looking at--for instance, that picture in his naval uniform is how he looked when I first met him.

Fry: Yes. That's becoming a Nixon classic now.

Jorgensen: Then the picture to the left of it, that's Roy Day. You recognize Roy Day and Nixon. Then, the president of the college and myself. That was the night that we launched the senatorial campaign.

Fry: My goodness! You look so young there.

Jorgensen: This over here is another picture of the same time, the senatorial campaign. This picture over here where you see the word "California," that's the time he was nominated as vice-president in Chicago. Then the other picture there is Pat Hillings, who took his place as congressman.

There's a couple of letters there of interest. On Nixon's twenty-fifth anniversary in politics I sent him a telegram congratulating him. He wrote back saying that he couldn't have done it without me--horse feathers, of course.

These other pictures are just from time to time. This picture up here--the large picture with the dinner party--that was a testimonial dinner given in my honor in Los Angeles, when I left Los Angeles to come to San Francisco. Just below that Bill Knowland is sitting there pointing his finger. In the background is Lock Waters, myself, and Charlie Thomas.

Fry: Yes, I wanted to ask you who Charlie Thomas is.

Jorgensen: Well, Charlie has done quite a bit of things. At that time Charlie was the national finance chairman for the Republican party. Then Al Hardwick, who was our Los Angeles finance chairman, and then there's Bill Knowland and Tom Pike. This is the first $100-a-plate dinner that was ever put on in Los Angeles. I organized it and asked Tom to be chairman of it.

Jorgensen: We had 4,200 people in the Shrine Auditorium at $100-a-plate. We had that place absolutely jammed full. We couldn't build the speaker's platform. You see, the auditorium has a balcony all the way around, and then the other side here. [showing photograph] We couldn't figure out how we could get the speakers so everybody could see them.

Finally Tom, who was in the construction business, said, "I think I've got the answer. I'll bring in a couple of these heisters." You know, the ones that raise packages up and down? You've seen them. The trucks go around and they stack up stuff. So Tom brought two of them and he fitted a platform on each one about this big [demonstrates]. So we had those things going up and down in the middle of the floor all night long. A speaker would get on, and we'd raise him up [laughing] and let him down.

Fry: [laughing] Your own elevator. When was that $100-a-plate dinner?

Jorgensen: That would be in 1952.

Fry: Was it primarily for funds for the Nixon and Eisenhower campaign?

Jorgensen: Yes.

Fry: We want to get to that.

Jorgensen: Then down below here--below that picture--is John Rousselot who is in Congress now from our old twelfth district, and myself and Pat Hillings and Harold Lutz.

Fry: Was that '52 also?

Jorgensen: Yes, it could be '52. Eisenhower, who was a friend of mine. Then I have a picture up there I call the "bully boy" picture. I was back in Washington. The delegation back there had a luncheon for me, so we came out to have our picture taken. Bill Knowland and Tommy Kuchel, who were Senators then, were behind me. Just as they took the picture they both pushed and I had my arms out. I call it the "bully boy" picture.

Fry: We'll have to have some of these pictures to illustrate your final manuscript.

Jorgensen: And then in some pictures over here, I'm director of the Panama Canal Company. This is a picture up here of the canal board.

Jorgensen: There's Charlie Thomas when Charlie was secretary of the navy. As a matter of fact, I was having dinner at the White House with Ike and about a dozen men. I used to go back. He asked me back four or five times for these little dinners he used to have. Charlie was just resigning from the navy, and we were getting ready for the '56 campaign. Ike was elected in '52 the first time, and in '56.

Ike was saying to me, "We're having a hell of a time finding a finance chairman." Charlie had already said good-by, and he was out in the car waiting for me. We were going back to the hotel together. Ike said, "Do you have anybody to suggest?"

I said, "Get Charlie."

He said, "Charlie's resigning from the navy. He's tired and wants to rest."

I said, "You call him tomorrow morning and tell him you need him, and Charlie Thomas will do it." I told Charlie about a year later, "I got you into that job." He did a good job for us too.

Fry: Was that the whole national campaign?

Jorgensen: Yes, national. He was national finance chairman--did a good job too.

Fry: I wanted you to give us a picture of what profession, what business, these people were in who first started Nixon out. We know Roy Day, and we know Uncle Perry.

Jorgensen: Ask the names and I'll try to fill you in.

Fry: Did Murray Chotiner have an advertising agency at that time?

Jorgensen: No. I think Murray more or less--he had an office, the family affairs. Murray was an attorney in his own law office. But I think he handled family affairs and such like. Call him an attorney. He was always an attorney.

Fry: I see Earl Adams was an attorney. Swede [Willard J.] Larsen--who was he?

Jorgensen: Swede was a dairyman out in the Whittier area.

Fry: Was that the name of his dairy--the Larsen Dairy?

Jorgensen: It could have been but I'm not sure. He was a rancher and a dairyman. Now wait a minute--Larsen. No, I think Larsen was associated with one of the oil companies. He had a ranch out there too, but I think he was with Standard Oil. I'm not sure, but I think so. Yes, I believe that's right. Who was the next one?

Fry: Boyd Gibbons.

Jorgensen: Boyd was an automobile dealer in Los Angeles with his father.

Fry: And Rockwood Nelson.

Jorgensen: Insurance business. He was an insurance broker in San Marino, south of Pasadena.

Fry: And then you said Gerald Keppel was with the telephone company.

Jorgensen: I think there was a little telephone company on there, and I want to call it the Associated Telephone Company. Gerald Keppel was vice-president and general manager of it. They later merged it into the General Telephone Company of California.

Fry: What was Arthur Kruse?

Jorgensen: Arthur Kruse was president of a building and loan company. I think it was the Alhambra Building and Loan Company in Alhambra.

Fry: I think that covers that. What about people who did a lot of contributing to big statewide campaigns--at least later they did--like Asa Call. Did they pitch in any on Nixon's early campaigns for Congress?

Jorgensen: Not the congressional campaigns. On the senatorial campaign, very much so.

Fry: We can get to that later. Were you aware of any of the CRA people--the California Republican Assembly people--working and pitching in on the congressional campaigns?

Jorgensen: Oh yes.

Fry: Someone told me you would know about that. Were you in CRA at the time?

Jorgensen: California Republican Associates? No.

Fry: No, this is the assembly I'm talking about.

Jorgensen: Oh, the California Republican Assembly. Yes. Harrison McCall was quite influential in the California Republican Assembly.

Fry: Judge Stanley Barnes was also in some of the CRA activities.* Was the CRA important? Did they swing a lot of weight, move a lot of votes?

Jorgensen: Their importance was before I got interested in politics. It seems to me they came into existence when the Republican party organization was at low ebb.

Fry: Yes--in the mid-thirties?

Jorgensen: Yes. They came in, and for a while they were fairly strong. By my time they were fading out. They thought they were still strong, but they didn't really swing a hell of a lot of weight.

[tape off]

Fry: You mentioned the California Republican Associates. What was that? Was this a central research group, or did they do something else?

Jorgensen: Let's see if I can give you some background, because it came into existence when I was in Los Angeles.

Charlie Jones, who was president of Richfield Oil, I think was probably the godfather of it. He had a young man working for him. Gosh, I can't remember his name. He's still with the company. They were attracting the attention of a lot of good names in Los Angeles, and they were instrumental in raising some money. It was Rod something [Rood] who carried on, but before him there was an employee of Richfield who was really the godfather, under Charlie Jones's direction.

Fry: Was it primarily of Southern California membership?

Jorgensen: Yes.

Fry: And primarily a fundraiser?

Jorgensen: Fundraiser, and then they'd hold luncheon meetings and have speakers and that sort of thing. They would endorse candidates.

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*See interview with Judge Stanley Barnes in Earl Warren's Campaigns, Vol. I, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1976.

Fry: Speakers for what--for candidates?

Jorgensen: They just had speakers come in and tell them what's going on in the world. I don't think they really ever had a great deal of clout.

III THE 1950 SENATORIAL RACE: HELEN GAHAGAN DOUGLAS VS. RICHARD NIXON

[end tape 1, side 2; begin tape 2, side 1]

The Decision to Run

Fry: I wanted to ask you about this letter from Roy Day which gives us the date here of November 1, 1949. Nixon writes to Roy Day and says, "I promised to let you know my decision relative to the United States Senate race next year. I have now decided to seek the post."

Jorgensen: The decision was made some time before that.

Fry: What can you tell us about the beginnings of that decision?

Jorgensen: Having to do with the 1950 Senate race of Nixon, I received a call from Nixon saying that a number of his friends were suggesting that he run for the United States Senate against Sheridan Downey, the Democratic incumbent. Some of us were fairly sure that Sheridan might not run because he was in ill health. I said I'd heard such talk in California but it was only talk. He asked me my opinion, and I said, "Stay in the United States House of Representatives where you're gaining seniority. This district will send you back again and again and again. You've got a good, safe district."

He ignored my advice and asked me if I'd check around and said he'd call me back in a week or ten days. I did and he called me back.

I said, "Well, I found some people interested, but it's pretty early."

He said, "I can come out to California for a visit. Will you arrange a couple of meetings for me? We'll go up to San Francisco, for instance, and check around."

Jorgensen: I said, "Okay."

So I called Bert [Albert Chester] Mattei, who was then president of the Honolulu Oil Company and had been active in politics in Northern California for some years. I told Bert that I had been talking to Nixon. He said he knew him and thought well of him. I said, "Could you get together a small group and I'll bring Nixon up."

"Sure."

So we arranged a luncheon at the Pacific Union Club at which Bert had about five or six influential San Franciscans, the majority of whom were bankers and businessmen.

Fry: Was that the one Dinkelspiel was in on?

Jorgensen: Did he say he was?

Fry: I can't remember.

Jorgensen: I don't think John was. I don't think he was, no.

Fry: I think he came into the campaign later.

Jorgensen: Yes, I remember when. So when I arrived with Dick we had lunch. Mattei leaned back and he said, "All right, kid," (as he usually addressed me), "what's on your mind?"

Facetiously, I said, "I'd like to introduce you to the next Senator from the state of California."

Bert said, "I allow how that is a pretty good idea."

That opened up the conversation, and the result was that each one around the table had a little something to say. But they were all favorable.

Fry: Could you tell me who these men were?

Jorgensen: I cannot. I'm sorry. I really don't have a clear memory. Most of them were strangers to me. I had met only one of them before, and then I can't remember his name. He was a banker. The rest of them were all strangers to me. I had not met them before.

Fry: What were they in mainly--banking?

Jorgensen: Banking and general top businessmen in the community that Bert had worked with.

Fry: If I knew what their businesses were, we could tie it in with the interview that Mr. [J. Walton] Dinkelspiel gave, or those people who were Northern Californian powers in the campaign.

Jorgensen: John wasn't there at all. I just can't give you the names. I don't remember. Anyhow, the important thing was to get Mattei in our camp. He came in very readily. We went down and visited around with two or three people in the afternoon.

We had already had a meeting in Los Angeles which I didn't attend. I set it up, but I was busy that day and couldn't go with Nixon. He got the same reaction there.

I can remember that Dick and I shared a bedroom going back on the Lark to Los Angeles that night. It was a warm evening, and both of us were sitting in our shorts in the bedroom talking. I was going to climb in the upper bunk and go to sleep. He was sitting in deep study. As I was about ready to get up, I said, "Well, you've made up your mind, haven't you?"

He said, "Yes. We're going to go." That was the final decision that he made that he was going to run for the Senate.

Bringing in Brennan and Chotiner

Jorgensen: Then I came awake and said, "Well, now, if you're going to do that, you've got to think about getting organized. Who the hell's going to run your campaign?"

"Why," he said, "you fellows in the district."

I said, "Dick, we're amateurs at this business. None of us has ever been involved in a statewide campaign. We could run one for you on the district, but when you talk about state we've got a real problem on our hands."

So we started discussing names of people that might head up the campaign as chairman. We finally pretty much centered on a fellow by the name of Bernard Brennan, who was an attorney in Los Angeles. Bernie (as we knew him) had been involved in statewide campaigns with Warren and Bill Knowland. We felt that he would have the know-how to get us started.

Jorgensen: He said, "Now who will we get to manage the campaign? Would you do it?"

I said, "No, Dick, I can't take the time to do it, but I'll act as the ramrod and keep it glued together." So we talked about this and that one. We wanted to get a man who had showed some ability along this line. I finally suggested, "Why not Murray Chotiner? Murray's a pretty agile individual. He's got good political sense."

He said, "All right. If you decide to do it, you make your deal with him."

The next day in Los Angeles, I called Bernard Brennan and said, "Bernie, would you like to be chairman of the Nixon campaign?"

He said, "Yes, I would."

I said, "What will it cost us?"

He said, "I'll take the chairmanship, but I don't want any pay, except expenses."

I said, "That's very nice of you because we haven't got any money. Why don't you meet me over at the Athletic Club for lunch," which he did. We talked about this and that and the other thing.

When I brought up Chotiner's name, he said, "I don't think we could find a better man."

I said, "Fine. I'll call Murray Chotiner and get him together for lunch." So I did.

A few days later Murray came in to have lunch with Bernie and I at the club. I said to Chotiner--whom I knew quite well by that time, knew how to deal with him--"Murray, are you interested in the Nixon campaign?"

He said, "Sure, I am."

I said, "How would you like to take on the job of campaign manager?"

He said, "Fine."

I said, "All right. Now, how much money is it going to cost?"

Jorgensen: Murray then got his negotiating hat on and gave me a price. I said, "Murray, you're talking through your hat. We can't raise that kind of money." As I recall (and I could be in error on this point), I think he wanted $25,000 for the primary and $35,000 for the general election. Don't hold me to these figures because it's been too long ago and I have nothing to substantiate them.

Finally I said, "Murray, I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll promise you $12,500 for the primary. If we win the primary and we get the money, we'll talk about the general election when it comes along. Is that agreeable?"

He said, "It is."

I said, "fine," and we shook hands on it.

I knew that Murray was very impatient with people who didn't have the I.Q. that he had. He had the habit of a man like that of tramping on them. He'd move ahead. He'd just leave wreckage behind him, but he would get the job done. So before we left I said, "Murray, now, you're going to be campaign manager, and here's what Bernie and I expect you to do. We outlined our organizational plan. We said, "If you do not follow the plan, just pick up your hat and go home. Do we understand this?"

Murray said, "I understand it."

I'll say this for Chotiner, he did a magnificent job for us in that campaign and never caused a bit of trouble and had greatly to do with the success of the campaign--there's no question about it--his thinking, his facility to execute, to get the campaign rolling, on the move. I did have to shield him a bit from the volunteers. I more or less took on the volunteer activities because Murray, being the pro that he was, was impatient with people who didn't move as fast as he wanted them to do.

Now at this point we had no money whatsoever, so that for the beginning, we kind of handled the campaign out of my office. I can recall [laughter], Nixon would be in the office and some clients would come in, and I'd have to ask him to go to the back office. We were in the W.M. Garland Building at Ninth and Spring Streets. Jack Garland was then the owner and manager.

Fry: Yes. That's the man you were telling me about at lunch.

Jorgensen: He was the brother-in-law of Norman Chandler.

I said, "Jack, we need some office space for the Nixon campaign." He was very favorably impressed with Nixon.

He said, "All right. I've got a couple of offices down on the second floor you can have." Before we were through, we had the whole second floor. We ran the campaign out of that during the primary and the general election. Jack was very fair to us as to the charges he made, because we weren't in a position to raise very much money.

We then started to organize the state--that is, Brennan did--and from then on we were into the campaign.

Fry: Is it time yet for you to describe to me what the differences were in the way you had your plans drawn for Chotiner's duties and Brennan's duties and your duties?

Jorgensen: Brennan was chairman of the campaign, and that meant overall jurisdiction of the campaign. He was the boss man. Chotiner was the campaign manager, reporting to Brennan. I occupied the position of no title, except as a ramrod who was kind of keeping the whole thing together. [laughing] When there was difficulties I always got them. But my job was to start arranging for money, get the volunteers organized as much as possible, and just generally do all the jobs that had to be done. I had no title whatsoever and never sought one. My situation was at the time that I didn't particularly seek a title. I didn't have to have a title. I just enjoyed doing the work. That's about it.

Fry: Mr. Dinkelspiel thought you were the head of the whole state and that Brennan was Southern California. Is that the way it sort of worked out? [laughter]

Jorgensen: That's sort of the way it worked out, because they all knew that Nixon depended on me to get this thing done. Therefore, they knew that I had his ear and that I was being consulted by him and that I was indicating to him what he ought to do and what he ought not to do, organizational-wise at least. I was just the invisible man, so as to speak, enjoying the job. Generally people listened to me, because the main thing I did--there was no money spent on that campaign without I approved it. I found that in politics, he who controls the funds has pretty good control of the campaign. That was basically what I did.

Primary Contenders

Jorgensen: The campaign went along, and we won, as you recall. In the primary we had really no opposition. We had one young fellow who filed in on a Republican ticket--oh, wait a minute. I'm wrong. I'm thinking of something else at the moment.

Fry: What about Raymond Darby?

Jorgensen: [laughter] Oh yes, I'll tell you a little story about Raymond Darby. Darby was a supervisor on the board of supervisors in Los Angeles. He wanted to run. One day I get a call from a chap. I'll be damned if I can remember his last name. He was head of the Merchants' Association or something like that, and quite an important man. He said so himself!

He said, "I wish you'd bring Mr. Nixon and meet with Mr. Darby in my office."

I said, "What for?"

He said, "Well, you've got two heavy contenders here, and we ought to talk about this."

I said, "Fine."

I called Dick. He'd come back to California by this time and was ready to campaign. So we went over to the office. We were shown into this nice office and presented to Mr. Darby, who I had met, and the telephone rang. This fellow got on the phone and he said [in a loud voice], "Oh, is that right! You raised $10,000 already? Wonderful, wonderful! How much are you going to get--$100,000? Oh, fine!" Down went the telephone. No comment.

Pretty soon the telephone rings again. [loudly] "Hello, Jim! Is that right, Jim? They're really going for it, huh? You think you can raise your $100,000? That's fine." I'm not saying so, but I know what's going on. These telephone calls are coming from the secretary outside.

In the meantime Darby says to Nixon, "Dick, you're a nice fellow," or something along this line, "but you can't win. I'll kill you. I'll just smother you in this campaign and the primary." Richard looks at me, and I just smiled and sat there. Another telephone call came in--some more money reported. So this went on for a while, and finally we said, "Thank you very much. We've enjoyed visiting with you. We're still running for the United States Senate." And we got up and left.

Jorgensen: When we got downstairs we were both laughing so damn hard as we went out of the building to think that they could pull a trick like this on us. Darby, of course, never was much of a factor. And we went on. I don't recall any more opposition than that. Do you have anything?

Fry: At one point Knight may have been considered. Then Judge Frederick Houser.

Jorgensen: Fred Houser thought that he wanted to, but we had a talk with Fred. I knew Fred, and after we'd had some conversation, he decided not to run for Senator.

Fry: He agreed to pull out?

Jorgensen: I don't know that he agreed to pull out, but he didn't run. You see, Nixon had at this time a tremendous national reputation as a result of the Un-American Activities Committee. He was a big man.

Fry: And the Hiss Case had just happened.

Jorgensen: The Hiss Case had built him. He was a tremendous figure in the public mind. All we were worried about now was, "Is Downey going to run again?" There were two opponents in the Democratic ticket--Manchester Boddy, who ran a newspaper called the Los Angeles Daily News, as I recall, and Helen Gahagan Douglas who was the actress. They were running in the primary. We were only concerned with who won there really. We weren't concerned about our getting the nomination. We were pretty sure that Dick could get the nomination. Every poll indicated to us there was no question about it. And we were hoping that we would get Helen Gahagan Douglas as the opponent rather than Boddy. Boddy we thought would run a better campaign than Douglas.

Now, nothing personally against her--she's a very charming person. I met her on two or three occasions, a very lovely lady. Unfortunately, she was a congressman from the Fourteenth Congressional District, which was a district from which people ran for Congress but didn't live in the district. Jimmy Roosevelt was elected out of that district. It was a district located down Central Avenue and had a large Negro population. I think Roosevelt, Gahagan Douglas, and it seems to me there was one other person, were elected from that district and never even lived in it.

Planning Strategy

Jorgensen: So when the primary was over we had won our nomination, and Helen Gahagan Douglas had won hers. I can remember then planning for the general election and sitting around and planning, as you do, what are going to be the issues. Of course, Nixon at that time was very high on this Communist thing. That was one of his chief points. He used that quite regularly. But his other things that he was talking about in the campaign made sense to the farmers up in the Valley and industrialists and people generally. It was his time--a time that he fit into the picture, no question about it.

Fry: By this time you had come around to think that he shouldn't stay forever in the House?

Jorgensen: Well, I came around because I was a friend and he wanted to do it, and I'd work for him. But at the time he asked me, it seemed to me--and I must say a lot of people joined me in it. Herman Perry felt the same way about it.

Fry: That he shouldn't run.

Jorgensen: That he shouldn't run for the Senate because we'd like to see him gain seniority in the House and get to be an important chairman of an important committee.

Fry: Did you also have other meetings in the south at this time to sound out whether he had enough support before the final decision was made?

Jorgensen: Not just meetings as such, but I moved around San Diego and out in Orange County and talked to politicos and people who ordinarily get involved in campaigns and people who form opinions. Likewise, the newspaper situation.

Fry: I wondered if they were checked out early.

Jorgensen: You always do, my dear. They don't commit themselves always, but you'll get the feel. Kyle Palmer, for instance, was the political editor of the Los Angeles Times at the time.

Fry: But much more than a political editor, I think. I get the idea that he really was a doer as well as a reporter.

Jorgensen: Kyle was an important fellow in politics because he had such a big newspaper behind him. By and large, the Chandlers trusted Kyle's opinions, and they would generally follow his

Jorgensen: lead as far as politics are concerned. Norman Chandler then was running the paper. So Kyle was an important man to have in your corner. There wasn't any question about it, that Kyle was with us.

We thought the Hearst papers were coming along. The Chronicle here in San Francisco had indicated support. We knew that we wouldn't get the McClatchy papers in the Valley. We didn't expect those because they generally go Democratic regardless of who's running. But overall it looked very favorable.

When we won the nomination we started to decide on strategies. I recall one of the strategies. I had something to do with this. Excuse me for using the "I," but I remember it very well. We were up in Santa Barbara over a long weekend to discuss and plan the campaign.

Fry: At San Ysidro Ranch.

Jorgensen: San Ysidro. Yes, that's right, sitting around and talking and planning this campaign. I said to them, "Now we have a woman who is running in opposition. I've learned enough in politics to know that the average woman in politics reasons with her emotions rather than her head." This proved true in this campaign.

As you know, in political campaigns--this thing that happened at Watergate was such a silly, stupid thing--your opposition will always try to plant somebody in your campaign headquarters, usually a big, tall, statuesque, blond, blue-eyed, endowed with nature's things so she shows off well. She's a secretary or she's a clerk, and she listens in and she looks at correspondence and reports back to the enemy's camp. Everybody did this in those days, and I think they still do, as far as that's concerned. But it's stupid!

Allow me to go back to what happened in Watergate. There was no reason for this whatsoever.

Fry: You mean to break in in the first place?

Jorgensen: To try to bug a headquarters, and particularly national headquarters, which knows nothing. But what are you concerned about in your opposition?

Fry: Cubans? [laughter]

Jorgensen: How much money do they have? Doesn't make a damn bit of difference to you how much money they have. It's how much money you have to defray your campaign, to do what you want. You don't need to know how much money they have. That's beside the point.

Secondly, what is their strategy? A successful candidate lays the strategy, and he makes his opponent play his game. Particularly, an incumbent officeholder should never let his opposition debate him. He should never meet him in debate. Nixon made that mistake when he met with Kennedy in the first presidential campaign. He made a tremendous mistake. You don't let your opposition get on the same platform. You ignore him! The only thing you're really concerned about is knowing what his itinerary is so you can move ahead of him.

Fry: Not afterwards?

Jorgensen: No. A good politician, in my opinion, doesn't answer his opponent. He makes the opponent answer him. He ignores. Oh, he can't ignore entirely, but he does for the most part.

So it was decided that we would move up ahead of Mrs. Douglas, which we did in the Valley, starting at Bakersfield, right up the line. (And you don't have to bug a headquarters to get an itinerary. Any newspaperman can give you that.)

We equipped a station wagon with broadcasting equipment and had a sedan for Mr. Nixon and the staff sent along with him. They moved into a town or city, picked a street corner, set up the equipment, and he'd start talking.

In the meantime we had several advance men there to arrange an interview at the radio station. He'd always have interviews with the newspapers in town. He'd have a breakfast meeting at which he'd probably speak to the businessmen or a luncheon where the women would be together. We worked the hell out of him. But he was ahead of his opponent.

Fry: By how far--a day or two?

Jorgensen: Two, three, four days--whatever you could work out. He'd stop and drop something for Mrs. Douglas to answer.

Fry: This was largely the 160-acre limitation issue?

Jorgensen: Lots of things.

Fry: And the Brennan plan?

Jorgensen: Yes. Our suspicions were right. Helen Gahagan Douglas spent up until the last thirty days of her campaign answering the question Mr. Nixon had asked her.

Fry: Was Reagan on her staff?

Jorgensen: He was a Democrat and on her staff. He worked for her in that campaign.

Finally, somebody got to her and told her, "Hell, you're not running your own campaign. You're doing nothing but answering this man [Nixon]."

The Pink Sheet

Jorgensen: Now we come to the "pink sheet." The press never forgave him for this. They keep hammering. I had a man out here from Washington about two months ago. He called me from Washington and said, "I want to have lunch with you." He was a reporter from the Washington Post. He brought this up.

"Well," I said, "do you want facts?"

"Yes, I want the facts. Why did you use pink paper?"

I said, "Look." Remember Marcantonio when he was a congressman from New York--a red-ass Red if there ever was one. When Dick started to run for the Senate, Marcantonio was supposed to have come to him (Dick told me this) and said, "Dick, do you want me to work for you or against you?" They were friends in the House. But Marcantonio was a Communist, and he said he was.

You see, Mrs. Douglas was a liberal, quite liberal in those days. Her voting record had been fairly liberal. So all that was done was list the voting record of Marcantonio and list the voting record of Helen Gahagan Douglas.

No lies--these are facts we got out of the Congressional Record. But we put it on pink paper. People drew their own conclusion. Now you say, well, that isn't good politics. Oh, there's been a lot rougher politics than I'd ever use! And that's the story of the pink sheet.

The Press and Nixon

Jorgensen: But you see, the press--the media--had been after this man ever since he proved they were wrong in the Alger Hiss case. Practically to a man your media said, "Hiss is innocent. He can't be a traitor." This man proved they were wrong. That's the first thing that happened. They never forgave him for that. This goes way back in time. They never forgave him.

If you go back through his campaigns--and I was sensitive to it, of course, watching television, listening to radio and reading--they were always giving him poor coverage. As an example, "Senator Nixon rose in the chamber and gave a tirade against So-and-so and So-and-so. [Changing tone] Senator Doe from Oshkosh gave them a learned discussion of the subject." Always cutting, cutting, cutting. This man, I think, held up under it pretty well.

Still, it you travel across this country and buy a newspaper, which I've done so many times, you read the feature writers and then you turn to the editorial page, and you wouldn't think you were reading the same paper--the editorial page fully supporting the Republican and the feature writers cutting him up all the time.

Fry: Yes. The percentage of papers that had Republican editorial politics was way up, I think, above the 80 percent mark in the early fifties. But there was a horizontal line across newspaper staffs, I guess, and below a certain point they were anti-Nixon.

Jorgensen: I've watched these television people. Ed Murrow was one of the worst of the group. I hated Ed Murrow with a fervor because I thought he was a mountebank; he was a cutter too.

Then, of course, after Nixon was defeated for the governorship [1962] out here in California, he did something which he shouldn't have done. He got mad, went downstairs, and blew his top. "You can't kick me around anymore." A little of a cry-baby attitude. They never forgot that.

Fry: That was years and years and years of resentment coming out.

Thoughts on Some Watergate Figures

Jorgensen: That's one of the places he got into trouble in this Watergate mess--the media was waiting for him. Now they had something. History will record that the media convicted him and ran him out of office.

I condone nothing that he did. I think he was stupid. I think the people around him were stupid. He made the mistake of having people around him who were inexperienced in day-to-day politics. [H.R.] Haldeman didn't know anything; [John] Ehrlichman didn't know anything; [John] Dean didn't know anything. These were all young men. Jeb Magruder--I knew Jeb, an ambitious kid. But none of them knew a damn thing about how the Hill works.

Fry: Their experience had been in his campaigns out here, I guess, right?

Jorgensen: Yes. Let me give you Magruder's experience. He was working for the Broadway Department Stores. Jeb wanted to do something in the 1968 presidential campaign, and I gave him a job in Los Angeles. Here was a fine-looking young man, good brain, hard worker, and full of ambition. My chief job with Jeb was to keep him doing the thing he was supposed to do and not try to do everything for everybody else. But that was his political experience before they took him to the White House.

Fry: That was it?

Jorgensen: Haldeman worked with Nixon in his first presidential campaign and in his gubernatorial campaign.

Fry: His first campaigns?

Jorgensen: When he ran against Kennedy. Ehrlichman was an advance man in the campaign. The rest of them I don't know too much about. But basically they were all young. Haldeman admits that in his television appearance here he's making.

The Role of County Organizations

Jorgensen: Anyhow, we won the senatorial campaign. As I remember, around 700,000 plurality, or something in that neighborhood. So that's the end, unless you have some questions on the senatorial campaign.

Fry: Yes, I do. Who was your county organizer? Was that Bernie Brennan?

Jorgensen: Yes, that was Bernie's job.

Fry: Okay. Were you separate from the Republican county organizations? You set up a separate organization?

Jorgensen: You generally do, not always. The county organization should remain neutral in the primary because you'll have more than one Republican running for the job, and they can't take the position of endorsing one. Occasionally they do, but not very often.

As a matter of fact, I think there's a law now that prohibits it. In the general election county organizations are supposed to support the nominee, of course. But by that time the candidate has built his organization. He had to start building it in the primaries, so he was going to carry it through if it worked well for him. Otherwise he'd change it and restructure it. So, by and large, your statewide candidate will organize his own campaign.

We always worked with the county chairmen. I would talk to them. For instance, I might get in the car and drive in some of the larger counties, tell them I'm coming and sit down with them and say, "Joe, tell me, I'm going to run Joe Dokes for office. What do you think?" He's supposed to reflect back to me. He's got his ear to the ground; he should have if he's doing his job. You get a feel from him. Likewise, if you're trying to recruit able people, he will lead you to able people and tell you who he thinks is good people to do a job for you. So you get help in your recruiting.

Observations on Earl Warren

Fry: What about Nixon's relationship to the other candidates running statewide? Shattuck was running for attorney general and Warren was running for governor. Were there any places where these three ran together?

Jorgensen: Warren would never run with anybody; you know that. He would never allow another candidate on the platform with him. Did you know that?

Fry: Yes, I had heard that. But I had also heard that Nixon or Chotiner tried very hard to get Warren to come out for Nixon.

Jorgensen: He did.

Fry: One of the stories that appears in books about the 1950 campaign, one of Chotiner's I think, is that they sent some young Republicans around to bug Helen Douglas into coming out for Jimmy Roosevelt, so that they could use this as a lever to apply to Warren to come out for Nixon. Do you know anything about that?

Jorgensen: No, I don't know anything about that. I never believed in bugging. I don't think you'd accomplish anything.

Fry: I'm sorry. By "bug" I meant after meetings that she was holding, to stand up from the audience and bother her into coming out for Jimmy Roosevelt.

Jorgensen: I suppose those things are done, but certainly the head of the campaign shouldn't condone anything of that sort.

Fry: The object wasn't really to get her to come out for Roosevelt. It was to get Warren to say something about Nixon. I think eventually he did.

Jorgensen: He did not.

Fry: In sort of a neutral way?

Jorgensen: Not very much. He never would endorse him. Why hell! His own man, Bill Knowland--he wouldn't even endorse Bill Knowland! And he appointed him to the Senate.

I didn't know Warren too well. I'd met with him. I remember one session I had. I had come up to a meeting in Sacramento. We had a school situation. A certain law had to be revised which was routine, I was told by our school people.

So I went up to Sacramento and I was talking to the governor. I said, "Governor, we need this piece of legislation to go through so that we can do so-and-so." My memory doesn't serve me, but certainly there would have been nothing wrong with it.

"Oh," he said, "I can't do that."

I said, "Why not? It's not controversial. It's allowing us to do what other school districts are doing."

And for some reason, he said, "Well, that's the trouble with you county chairmen. By God, the only time you ever come around to see me is when you want something done."

Jorgensen: I said, "What's wrong with that? We work our ass off for you during election time." And we got into quite a hassle. There were words, which I won't repeat on this tape, passed. So I never saw eye to eye with Earl Warren.

The last time I saw Earl Warren was in Washington. There was a meeting down there; it was a big one out at the armory. I went down from New York, and as I was walking around, here was Earl and Nina, standing alone, not a soul coming up to greet them or say hello! I thought, "What a shameful thing to happen to a man!"

Fry: He was Chief Justice then?

Jorgensen: Yes. There was something; I've forgotten what it was.

Fry: Was it a Republican-- No, it wouldn't--

Jorgensen: Yes, it was a Republican thing. I don't know what the meeting was for. It was a waste of time I know, and money.

Campaign Organizers

Fry: Let's see. I have a few more questions to ask you on the organization of the 1950 senatorial campaign. Did you use these Republican Associates in this campaign?

Jorgensen: I just can't answer. Were the Associates in being at that time?

Fry: Yes, I think so.

Jorgensen: Well, if they were, I'm sure that they endorsed Nixon.

Fry: Did you have a speaker's bureau?

Jorgensen: Yes.

Fry: That went out all over the state?

Jorgensen: It didn't go out all over the state, but covered large population centers.

Fry: They were local--through the counties?

Jorgensen: Sidney Laughlin in Los Angeles was chairman of the speaker's bureau.

Fry: What were the flying squadron?

Jorgensen: Damned if I know. As you get into a campaign a lot of these young people want to get involved, and so you get a lot of hoopla. They'll go to meetings and put up the whoop-de-doo, and singing and dancing and costumes and waving banners. I suspect that's what it was. I don't remember anything about a flying squadron.

Fry: I was going to ask you about some names here that have appeared in the press. Was Herbert Klein a publicity writer?

Jorgensen: Herbert Klein worked for the one big newspaper in Alhambra. Herb helped us--let's put it that way--on publicity and writing, I believe, in both of the congressional races. I think so. I'm sure he was involved in the senatorial campaign. Herb worked in publicity and editorial writing.

Fry: Nixon's close friend, Jack Drown, we haven't talked about very much. I'm told that he was an advance man in the campaign.

Jorgensen: You see, Jack's wife [Helene] and Pat Nixon were schoolgirls together, and they've remained friends. Jack has a distribution outfit in Long Beach, magazines and that sort of thing. He's done very well, as far as I know. I know Jack quite well. When the Nixons were young, they and the Drowns saw each other and visited back and forth. Jack lives out in Palos Verdes. He has a lovely home out there.

I can't tell you about the senatorial campaign--what Drown did--but I know in the presidential campaign he was an advance man. I think when Nixon went for vice-president, Jack was in charge of the train operation--in other words, we had a special train--but he was always closely involved, along with Ray Arbuthnot. Is that another name you have there?

Fry: That's the other name I have, yes--Ray Arbuthnot.

Jorgensen: Ray did the same thing. Ray is a rancher and has a couple of thousand acres of orange groves out in Riverside County and a big spread up in Nevada. Wonderful guy. He was always working. But he was an advance man. He never held any job that I know of. He always helped in the district. He lived out in Azusa.

[end tape 2, side 1; begin tape 2, side 2]

Fry: There was another man whose name comes up quite a bit, particularly in the financial reports of the campaign. That's Harvey Hancock.

Jorgensen: Harvey Hancock was in the senatorial campaign. As I recall, John Dinkelspiel was our Northern California chairman. Harvey Hancock was our Northern California manager, acting under Chotiner's direction.

Fry: I understand he's down in Carmel now.

Jorgensen: He's lived down there for years.

Fry: How did you work with Harvey Hancock?

Jorgensen: Oh hell, I was up and down and all around, just the same as I worked with everybody else--kick him in the tailbone to get some money, get the job done.

Fry: In '50 was the medical profession part of your picture?

Jorgensen: I don't particularly recall.

Financing the Campaign

Fry: I brought along the financial reports that were turned in to the state, which might not be too much help, because at that time I think you only had to turn in those things that were given to the candidate's own financial committee.

Jorgensen: I can't help you. I don't have any--

Fry: I just thought the names might mean something to you. I notice that you had an agriculture committee. Some of those names which might make you recall something were Henry L. Strobel, Colonel F.B. Robson. At lunch you said that a Robinson was important for raising money with Asa Call. Is that right?

Jorgensen: The Robinson you're talking about was with the Security Bank back in the thirties. He was a powerful man. The Security Bank was a powerful institution in Los Angeles. At that time Asa Call was the president of the Pacific Mutual Company. So, it was a powerful group. They were great opinion-makers and influenced considerable in the political field.

Fry: I just wondered if these agriculture committees served mainly as liaisons or as somebody who could really bring in money from your large agrarian landowners.

Jorgensen: Both.

Fry: Who were some of your big farmers in the Valley who were the most successful contributors to Nixon? I'll bet [Wofford B.] Camp was one. He's one of the best friends of our office [laughing]. I think he mentioned that in his oral history memoir.*

Jorgensen: That name is familiar. I can't really answer that question. The names don't come to me readily now. But I know that we had good support.

The Issues: Oil and Anti-Communism

Fry: I'm moving more into issues now. One of the big issues in that campaign was state control of tidelands--the oil. Do you remember if this was connected primarily with Standard and the big oil companies, or whether it was largely the independent oil companies?

Jorgensen: My guess and memory would indicate it was the independents.

Fry: Then the Korean war broke out. I wondered if this changed the campaign any. Your anti-Communism issue was already pretty well established. The Korean war broke out during the senatorial campaign, about the middle of June, 1950.

Jorgensen: I don't recall that it had much effect one way or the other.

Fry: Backing up a little bit from the Korean war, on March 12, 1950, Nixon came out with a public press release and speech on his four-point program of action to combat the Communist conspiracy. I think Vito Marcantonio and his voting record figured in that. So, I wondered if this press release was something that had been carefully planned for release right at that time. Do you remember anything about that that we should get down for the record? It looks like in the newspapers that this was a very important thing in Nixon's campaign.

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*See interview with Wofford B. Camp, Cotton, Irrigation, and the AAA, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1978.

Jorgensen: I don't recall. As a matter of fact, Mrs. Fry, a lot of the decisions on issues were not consulted with me particularly, because I was so damn busy with the nuts and bolts that the boss himself, with Brennan and Chotiner, handled that. I would sit in and listen, but I never prided myself on being a great man as far as issues were concerned. I let someone else do that, the candidate. Mine was the nuts and bolts department.

Fry: Did you do very much with techniques like torchlight parades or the debates?

Jorgensen: We covered the debates.

Fry: We covered them for the Voorhis campaign. There was one in the Commonwealth Club up here where he again got Helen Douglas off balance by pulling out a telegram from one "Eleanor Roosevelt."

Jorgensen: Yes. We gave the poor woman kind of a rough time. She's a very nice person personally. She just was in water over her head. She unfortunately didn't have people around her who could be a hell of a lot of help for her. No, I don't think we used the debate much after the campaign against Voorhis until we got to Kennedy, and that was a cardinal mistake.

Campaign Memorabilia

Fry: There were a number of radio addresses. I was wondering if this John Wolfe and Company, which apparently made the recordings, might have some of those. It would be good to have them in the archives. Do you know anything about those?

Jorgensen: I don't remember.

Fry: Do you remember anything about the things which, as historical evidence, would self-destruct instantly, like the radio addresses or the billboards? I haven't seen any pictures of billboards, and I haven't heard anything about the radio addresses that Nixon gave. This is something that there's no record of.

Jorgensen: You see, the trouble with political campaigns is nobody acts as an historian.

Fry: [laughter] I know. I've been saying for years that each political campaign needs an historian. But, it's the last thing in the world they want.

Jorgensen: I have boxes of stuff down in the basement that I've saved. I've gone through some of it and thrown it away. The other day I was going through something, and I found some quarter cards. Quarter cards are the ones you stick up on windows. It was the first quarter card we used with Dick Nixon. Which picture was on it? This picture over here [gesture], I think, maybe--I don't know--one of these. My son had dug them out some place in the attic. He'd drawn circles on the back of them and used them as targets. [laughter] I was going to send one to Dick, and then I thought no, I won't do it.

None of us save any material. I recall we always used the red, white and blue motif on his billboards as much as we could--American, American, American, American. I wouldn't know where to turn for that stuff. I just doubt that there's very much around. I suppose everybody might have a little bit here and a little bit there.

The financial records for instance--I have never taken a set of financial records after I look at the final ones and approve them. I leave them with the treasurer. I don't want them.

Fry: I wonder if any of those would be around.

Jorgensen: Sure, there would be. Doug McLellan, who's the vice-president of the United California Bank in Los Angeles, was the treasurer of the 1952 campaign. Wait a minute; hold it. I'm wrong. Douglas J. McClelland was the treasurer of the 1968 campaign, and he was treasurer of the 1972 presidential campaign. He was treasurer of the George Murphy senatorial campaign in 1970, I think. I can't remember who the hell was the treasurer of the 1952 campaign--Hartwick. Hartwick was the treasurer of the '52 campaign.

Of course from now on you'll go to the secretary of state and you'll get a complete record because the financial reporting now is very tight. You have to be very thoughtful about it.

Fry: You can tell that these earlier financial reports are just fragmentary.

Jorgensen: That's right.

Fry: It would be good if we could have some of those deposited. You may want to put it under seal for a while, but that would help eventually. Any of the campaign materials would also help; they would be a good supplement to your interview.

Jorgensen: It's unfortunate that you didn't ask me earlier. I remember the 1968 campaign. We had the state headquarters at the corner of Wilshire and Western Boulevard, and then I secured the same space for the Murphy campaign in 1970. I went up in the upstairs room, and here were bundles of presidential materials [laughing] still there. I had given specific instructions: "Get everything out of here. Don't let anything stay! Get it out into the campaign!" And still there were things left over. This is always true of every campaign. It's unfortunate.

Fry: So what did you do with it?

Jorgensen: I had the junk man come and get it. There were posters and car strips and things like that.

Fry: Those things are eventually interesting museum items.

Jorgensen: Someday I may get down in the basement. I've got buttons and things that go back to the days of Nixon, for instance, in his first campaign. Harrison McCall got the bright idea of buying thimbles and have printed around the thimble, "Give the needle to the PAC" or something like that. We gave away thousands of those thimbles.

Fry: And do you still think you have one?

Jorgensen: I think there's two or three around here somewhere.

Fry: Marvelous. I hope you'll have time to come over across the [San Francisco] Bay and see our present exhibit which centers on the Earl Warren era, and includes all of the campaigns in this period. We didn't have very much on Nixon. You might enjoy seeing it. Then you can also get an idea of the sort of material we need.

Jorgensen: I will someday.

Fry: I have just a few things to clean up here. You've already told me about the pink sheet. Someone mentioned that at one point there were some leaflets dropped by air in Southern California saying that if you would answer your phone--these were the final days of the campaign--and instead of saying hello say, "Vote for Richard Nixon," you could get a sugar and creamer or something sent to your house. Do you remember that? [laughter]

Jorgensen: Could be. I don't recall that. You've got people coming to you in a campaign saying, "I got an idea!"

Fry: All kinds of ideas, yes.

Jorgensen: And so, after listening to them I say, "All right. If you can finance it, I have no objection to your doing it." That's the last I'd hear of it.

Fry: There were some interesting problems, I think, in Richard Nixon's support. One of them was Gerald L.K. Smith who was coming out strong for Nixon. Nixon repudiated him on September 7, 1950. Why was that? He was a good anti-Communist.

Jorgensen: Yes, but he was nutty as a fruitcake. The boss felt that he'd been doing more harm that he was good.

Support from Democrats

Fry: We haven't talked any about the Democrats in the '50 campaign. Large factions of the Democrats opposed Helen Gahagan Douglas in the north and then came over to Nixon--more so in the north than in the south. I get this from a San Francisco Examiner article. George Creel headed some Democrats for Nixon?

Jorgensen: Yes.

Fry: Was that the Creel who was Woodrow Wilson's publicity man?

Jorgensen: Propagandist.

Fry: Are you the one who rounded up these people? Or how was that done?

Jorgensen: I can't take credit for that. Always my finger was around in somewhere, but if I said I took care of it for him, I'd be lying to you. A great majority of people came and volunteered. Creel volunteered, I'm sure. We didn't have to recruit him.

Fry: As each Democrat would come over, like Maud K. Symington and Alfred J. Elliott of Tulare, they would make their statement to the press that they had decided to come over to Nixon's side. Their statements always referred to the Communist world-wide conspiracy. I didn't know whether this was a determining factor in their coming over, or whether it was just

Fry: the theme of the campaign and they all were told to make that statement. In other words, I'm trying to find out why they left the Democratic party and came to Nixon.

Jorgensen: I suspect that some of them came because of the Communist issue. We're talking about the senatorial campaign now. I suspect others felt that Mrs. Douglas was a little bit too liberal; I suspect it.

Fry: Just generally you mean?

Jorgensen: That's right, and a little befuddled too, because her campaign didn't--

You see, people commence to size up a campaign long before election day. Take, for instance, Nixon's win against McGovern. Anybody with any sense could have told you sixty days before that campaign that McGovern didn't have a chance. He didn't have a chance.

Fry: You could detect that in this campaign too, in '50?

Jorgensen: Sure. After you've dealt with campaigns a while you get a sense. You sense it; you feel it; it comes to you. You're not wrong very often.

More on the Pink Sheet

Fry: As the campaign progressed did you pay any attention to what Helen Douglas was saying in her answers to Nixon?

Jorgensen: Oh, sure.

Fry: Her answer to the Marcantonio thing apparently was that Nixon had voted with Marcantonio too a certain number of times on foreign policy. Did you answer that?

Jorgensen: We didn't say he didn't!

Fry: Or just let it drop?

Jorgensen: No! The record is there. There's no use saying that he didn't do it. The record speaks. That's all we did on the pink sheet--here's the record, but you draw your own conclusions.

Fry: Then you didn't answer her comeback?

Jorgensen: No! Why? The record is there. You can't erase the record.

Fry: Did Nixon have much support from labor?

Jorgensen: Yes. Of course, in this last election [1972], he had a big labor support. In the senatorial campaign he had good labor support.

Fry: I noticed that in 1950 Nixon had come out saying that trade unions have done the "best job in this country" in combating Communism. He commended AFL president William Green. Did they come out officially for him in this?

Jorgensen: I don't think nationally they did, but you'd have your local unions which would endorse him. Of course, we were always working on that too. We had labor men. For instance, in the motion picture business in Los Angeles we had certain Republicans in the labor union working. They were paid. They were part of the job.

We had a labor committee set up. In politics you set up committee, committee, committee, committee. You have a committee for beauticians, a committee for aviation, a committee for garbage collectors, a committee for masseurs. You have committee, committee, committee. Most of these committees are paper committees. But some gal is interested and you say, "All right, Mrs. Fry, you go ahead and organize a committee for the interviewing industry or whatever you want."

Fry: Oral historians. [laughter]

Jorgensen: She'd say, "Well, how will I finance it?"

"You can certainly finance it yourself. You were able to get enough people interested. It doesn't cost you much to buy some paper you could print it on and mimeograph. Now you send that out to all your members."

Fry: You make it sound so easy.

Jorgensen: It is easy. You send it out to them. Maybe you send it out to ten thousand in the state of California, and you add in there, "Help financially." You'll defray your expenses more. That extra money comes back into the campaign fund. So you get all these committees you want. Hell, I had committees from knife-sharpeners down. [laughter] You lose track of them; they get just that long.

Fry: Did you have to have ethnic groups too then?

Jorgensen: Sure. I should say so. You have Italian. Hell, the Chinese here in San Francisco are organized up to their earlobes.

Fry: Really?

Jorgensen: You bet your life. They really go to work. And the Italians, the Jews, the Negroes. Sure. You try to get all of those groups to have representation to your campaign. You don't have to recruit them. They seek you; they'll come to you--leaders.

[tape off]

Joseph McCarthy

Fry: Helen Douglas had Averell Harriman and Attorney General J. Howard McGrath come out to California for her. I think fairly early in the campaign McCarthy came out and made a speech in Los Angeles. But I didn't find any speeches that he gave here in Northern California. Was that the extent of his speeches?

Jorgensen: I don't think I recall McCarthy's visit to Los Angeles frankly.

Fry: I can't give you the date on it, but it's in--there's a note.

Jorgensen: I don't say it didn't happen. I just don't remember.

Fry: I thought maybe if I could tell you whether it was in the fall or spring.

Jorgensen: No, it doesn't bring anything to memory.

Fry: He may not have come out precisely for that. He may have come out for something else, because at that time McCarthy was just beginning to get started on his own anti-Communist campaign.

Jorgensen: Of course Nixon was getting--he had supported McCarthy, I think, or rather had stood back of him until McCarthy finally just got to be a psycho case. Then Dick moved away from him.

Fry: I think just the day before Nixon announced, on November 4, [1949], he had called for a special commission to be formed to follow up McCarthy's charges for an investigation of the State Department. I think the reason McCarthy had asked them to do that was because of Nixon's position as the top Republican on the House Un-American Activities Committee. So at this point they were probably working together a lot more than they did later on. Do you remember if there were any other out-of-state people--big, national guns--who came in?

Jorgensen: I don't recall really that there was. I think we ran our campaign pretty much ourselves. Nixon had a real beautiful image at this time.

Fry: Apparently he was a terribly effective public speaker.

Jorgensen: He was an excellent man on the platform.

Fry: That's why I wish we could get some records.

Jorgensen: I'll tell you what I'll do, Mrs. Fry. I don't know how successful I'll be. I'll be in Washington in about ten days. They're gathering the stuff up back there. I'll ask a couple of people who are working on it if they've got any records. I imagine it's in a hell of a mess. They've been cleaning out his stuff up at the White House and getting it out of there and shipping it out. Of course, part of his papers are being held. But this stuff would be back. I'll see what I can do.

Fry: Yes, this would be his California years that I think would belong in The Bancroft Library, or the California sections of his national campaigns or anything like that. It can sit there under seal for any length of time.

Donors and Supporters

Fry: Let me hand you this list here. Here's a list of people whose names I've picked up from other interviews and from the budget list who might have helped, especially in the '50 campaign, and others who might have been just general Republican donors. I thought that might bring some more names to mind.

Jorgensen: Jes Dart. He's head of Dart Enterprises, which is the drug outfit. He has a series of drugstores. Jes is a pretty good Republican. He's raised money for everybody, as well as for Nixon.

Leigh Battson. Yes, he's helped. Leigh at one time was a good money raiser. Mendel Silberberg was always a good man in the movie business. Mendel always came through. Frank Doherty--always stable. [tape off] Of course, he's always been a good money man.

Fry: Did Dean Witter go back as far as 1950? I don't know quite what time span he covered.

Jorgensen: Yes. Neil Petrie was in the furniture business down in Los Angeles. I can't think of the firm. He was a civic leader.

There was Willard Keith also, who was basically in the insurance business, but many other things. They were always good. Charlie Thomas--I've already told you about Charlie Thomas. He was a money raiser and was secretary of the navy.

Fry: After he was secretary of the navy was it Knowland's campaign that he headed?

Jorgensen: He was finance chairman. Paul Shoup was a little ahead of my time, but he had a good reputation.

Fry: What was Paul Shoup in?

Jorgensen: Southern Pacific and many other things.

Fry: I was connecting him with Merchants and Manufacturers Association. A lot of other things, I guess.

Jorgensen: Yes, many things. We've talked about Silberberg and Kyle Palmer. Frank Freeman was always a big help to us in the movie business. Louis Meyer was always helping, and he also told you how to do it. He was the king of the roost in his place.

Fry: [laughing] Did he ever tangle with Asa Call?

Jorgensen: Not that I know of. Keith Spalding--another man in Los Angeles who was always a good party man; he'd raise money. Harold Morton--he represented the independent oil companies for quite a number of years. Carl Miller--he was always a help. He ran the Pacific Coast edition of the Wall Street Journal.

Fry: That was his main job?

Jorgensen: Yes. Roy Crocker was one of the men who was early in the Nixon camp. He's in the building and loan business.

Fry: When I talked to Asa Call, I talked to Roy Crocker that afternoon.

Jorgensen: How is Roy? I haven't seen him in a couple of years.

Fry: He still goes to his office too every day.

Jorgensen: Must be getting pretty well along in years.

Fry: But he's still right there with his fabulous collection of historic documents from Napoleon to Abraham Lincoln.

IV VICTORY FOR EISENHOWER-NIXON: THE 1952 CAMPAIGN

The Checkers Speech

Jorgensen: Were you in on the events around the fund that Dana Smith was trustee on?

Fry: Yes. That's in 1952--the Checkers fund.

Jorgensen: I was there.

Fry: Were you? That broke on that train, didn't it? Nixon was on the train.

Jorgensen: The St. Louis Dispatch was the one that broke the story, and Nixon was up in Oregon when the story broke.

Fry: I thought he was in Bakersfield.

Jorgensen: He was on his way up. He was going through the Valley.

[end tape 2, side 2]

[The following segment is taken from the end of tape 3, side 1.]

I pitched off the rally in Pomona as the chairman of the county. Then we had introductions. Dick got on the train and went off, and I went back to work. The next I heard of him was Chotiner calling me from up in Oregon, I guess it was, about this so-called secret fund.

Then we decided to raise some money. I got on the telephone to a few people here and there and took calls back East--I was calling all during the night--saying that they'd raise some money. I forgot the figure that it took, but it was something around $75,000, I think, at that time to put on that television--

Fry: The Checkers speech?

Jorgensen: The Checkers speech. Of course, that Checkers speech was a fantastic thing, the results that came in. Really, the telegrams come in by just mailbags full of them. We'd pile them up.

Fry: And all to urge him to stay in, right?

Jorgensen: Yes, sure.

Fry: Yes. That was amazing. Was that typical of the type of public speaker that Nixon was, or did he do a lot of additional boning up and get additional training for that one key speech?

Jorgensen: Oh, no. That's one of the reasons we selected him to run for Congress. You see, he had won quite a few prizes in debating. We wanted a man who could stand on a platform and express himself, and he had the ability then. Well, I'll tell you what happened.

We sat around the Ambassador Hotel for two or three hours in the afternoon with him, offering suggestions. He kept notes on this yellow pad that he carried. Finally he said, "All right, fellows, I'm going into the bedroom and think about this." So he wrote out his remarks there.

He only wanted one person to go to the television station with him, and that was Chotiner. The rest of us scurried around. I went home. I was having a dinner party that night. I went home and we delayed the dinner until the TV speech on the fund came on. I said to my guests, "Watch what happens. The American people will just absolutely endorse this 100 percent."

Fry: And they did. But do you mean he wrote that speech by himself?

Jorgensen: Yes, oh yes.

Fry: No kidding! I thought he would have had batteries of experts on that, because here his whole career was at stake.

Jorgensen: No, even when he became president he would make out the outline of his speeches.

Fry: So he didn't have anyone to help him?

Jorgensen: No, I don't think he had a speech writer while he was vice-president. I'm sure he did after becoming president, naturally with all the speeches he had to make. But he would write down--

Jorgensen: even then--the main points and let somebody fill in material to support it. Then he would check it back and forth. Rose Woods wrote most of those for him. I was in Washington last week. We were talking about various and sundry things. We mentioned his speech writing, and she said, "Well, Frank, he wrote almost all of his own speeches." When I say he wrote them I mean he wrote the guts and then have people fill in materials to support it and polish it and make suggestions.

I've watched him many times when he was in California before he went back as vice-president. We'd be riding in the car and that yellow pad would be out on his knee and he'd be jotting down things as we were driving out someplace where he was going to give a talk.

The National Convention

The Train Ride

[Interview 2: April 22, 1975]
[begin tape 3, side 1]

Fry: When did you first begin in the '52 campaign? Were you in on the decision to form the delegation? I think this was the coalition delegation with Earl Warren as a definite presidential candidate.

Jorgensen: And Senator Knowland.

Fry: Yes.

Jorgensen: In 1952 I was living in Los Angeles and was still the head of the Los Angeles County Central Committee. I did not have a great deal to do with the formation of the delegation except to advise and counsel Bernard Brennan.

I was also a delegate to the Republican national convention, which would normally come to the chairman of the county central committee. As I recall, I gave up my appointment as delegate to Jack Garland, who had been a staunch supporter of the party and who felt it was a great honor to be a delegate. I took the alternate position on the delegation.

Fry: Yes, there's your name on the delegation list there. [refers to list] Do you remember who asked you to be on the delegation and how?

Jorgensen: I think it was just a foregone conclusion that the chairman of the biggest county in the state would be on the delegation. There wasn't any question about it. I don't remember having to ask to get on or even suggesting that I would be on. As a matter of fact, I felt at that time that I had enough clout in party organization that I didn't need to be a delegate as long as I could attend the convention as an alternate--my reason for giving up the seat to Mr. Garland. But I can't give you much from memory as to the formation of the delegation. I think that probably went to the grave with Bernie Brennan when he passed away.

I do know that we had a special train that was going to the convention. We came up from Los Angeles to Sacramento, and the delegation met in the assembly chambers at the state capitol to form itself into the formal group that would represent California at the Republican convention. As I recall, Senator Knowland was chosen as the chairman of the delegation.

Fry: Before this there was quite a bit of talk in the newspapers and elsewhere about the delegation being a sort of back-up delegation for Eisenhower. In other words if Warren didn't get in, then it would go to Eisenhower. Nixon had sent out some questionnaires--do you remember them?--to the California voters, to some 23,000 selected voters, asking who they thought would be the strongest candidate, and it was Eisenhower.

Jorgensen: As a matter of fact, I don't recall that there was a strong Taft group in the delegation. There were those who felt that Taft was a good candidate, there were those who felt that Eisenhower was a good candidate, and there were those who were hoping that Warren might be the candidate.

The delegation was pledged, as I recall, to support Warren through the first ballot. There had been some infighting among the delegates, as there always is in a political endeavor of this sort. It became apparent that some of the delegates would desert Warren on the second ballot. Bill Knowland was trying to hold the delegation together. There was much political palaver on the train going to Chicago.

At that time I think I was fairly neutral. I felt that Taft was probably the stronger candidate. But when I arrived in Chicago on Sunday morning, by the middle of the afternoon I realized that Taft was losing and that Eisenhower would probably come along very strong on the first ballot. As history will tell you, Mr. Nixon flew out to Denver. He was a member of the delegation.

Fry: That was when he boarded the train.

Jorgensen: Yes, he came aboard the train. I recall that he came up to our joint drawing room to report on what had been going on. At that time he indicated that Eisenhower was running very strong and that Taft had lost ground in the delegation fights of two or three states regarding their seating. History will tell you what went on. The little cadre around Warren on the train were incensed that he would talk to his friends before he would report to the governor, and they managed to stir up considerable commotion.

Fry: What happened?

Jorgensen: You know, Mrs. Fry, when you get into a group like this rumors fly here and fly there and you start rumors and you make statements. If you're on the front end of the train you have to run pretty fast before the statement gets to the back end of the train. You stay up all night and you drink a lot of liquor and you eat a lot of food and you don't accomplish a blessed thing, except to enjoy yourself.

It was apparent that probably as much as a third of the delegation--maybe even more--were not solid Warren supporters. This goes back to the fact that the governor had not been a leader in the Republican party. Many of us resented that. I was one that did, and I had so told the governor on two occasions. He used us for his purposes for election but gave us little or no direction. I remember doing so the last time in his office in Sacramento, and there ensued a heated discussion, but all in good nature. Nevertheless, a section of the delegation was--if I say "lukewarm" that would be about it.

Fry: Back on the train, you were on a car with Ray Arbuthnot, Pat Hillings, and Harrison McCall.

Jorgensen: The four of us had two bedrooms, and we took out the partitions so that we had one big room for the four of us.

Fry: Who was the other couple?

Jorgensen: There was Arbuthnot, Hillings, McCall and myself. This was fairly well up on the front of the train, as I recall. I guess it would be car 101.

I remember [laughing] when we got to Sacramento it was hotter than the hinges of hell. We got there in the morning and went over to the assembly hall and held a meeting. Then we had a lunch and came back to the train. They had let these cars sit out in the boiling sun all day long and hadn't turned on the air conditioning. When you got in it was like walking into an oven.

Jorgensen: So, we bribed the porter to bring a tub of ice. He brought up a couple of little jugs of ice. We said, "That won't work. Get a tub or something." We set that in the middle of the room. I think we went Western Pacific to Salt Lake City and Rio Grande probably over to--I don't remember. Anyhow, as we went up the Feather River Canyon, I can remember we were hoping it would cool off. They got the air conditioning started, but the cars just baked all night. So we stripped down and were all sitting in just our shorts and drinking ice cold drinks, which had a little something in them. I remember we didn't eat dinner that night till about--the steward was going out of his mind because we wouldn't come to dinner. [laughter]

Fry: And you just let the tub of ice sit there?

Jorgensen: We'd dip in it every once in a while. [laughter]

Fry: I didn't know whether you were using it for drinks or using it to put your feet in. [laughter]

Jorgensen: Somebody might have put their foot in it. But no, it was used for drinking. We thought it might cool off the room a little bit too. It melted pretty fast.

Fry: Sounds pretty miserable. When Nixon boarded the train then in Denver, I think--as near as I can tell from talking to other people--Hillings helped him in talking to the other delegates about Eisenhower's chances. Was it clear to you at this time that there was any effort made to get people to change their vote from Warren to Eisenhower on the first ballot?

Jorgensen: I don't really think so. There's been stories about that. Nixon did talk to us. He told us what went on in Chicago. We had the story pretty well. As he came on the train he came up to our joint bedrooms and sat there and talked to us for quite some time. It was evident from what he said. He even mentioned his own possible candidacy, as I recall. Naturally you're going to get all kinds of stories that come out of these delegations because everybody interprets their way. I'm sure that probably in talking to others, he told them the story that Eisenhower looked strong and so forth, but I don't know that there was any effort. Certainly in my purview there was no effort made to change anybody's record.

After we were in Chicago for twenty-four hours we were sure. The governor hasn't got a chance at all! The bulk of them went over to Eisenhower, as you recall. In the final vote we did. No, I don't think there was a great effort on the train. I've heard that story too many times.

Arriving in Chicago

Jorgensen: We arrived in Chicago. All of us who were visiting with friends of ours from other states, and particularly on Monday, were pretty sure that the tide would run to Eisenhower. As a matter of fact, I bet one of my friends one of the large steaks that were served in the restaurant next to the Pavilion out in the packing yard area. I forget the name of it. There's a hotel there.

Fry: But it was famous for its steaks because it was near the stockyards.

Jorgensen: Yes. It was right next door to the stockyards. You could eat your steak and smell the stockyards at the same time. [laughter] They served an eighteen ounce steak. It was all steak, I must admit. I bet one of my friends one of those steaks, which in those days cost about $6.50, that Eisenhower would win the nomination. I remember his buying the steak the evening after the nomination. I tried to eat it all, and it was a real job.

Nevertheless, Warren was trying to hold his delegation, hoping that there would be a deadlock between Taft and Eisenhower and that he would have his run. But this never happened.

I recall sitting next to Senator Knowland during the roll call at the convention. When the roll call indicated that Eisenhower was running very strong, Knowland said that California after the first ballot should get to the platform and get the recognition that you seek in such an affair, to try to swing the tide. We couldn't do it in the first roll call because we had pledged to support Governor Warren.

It turned out that by the time Warren gave his permission to Knowland, all that Bill got on the platform was elbows and knees. He had to stand in the wings to wait his turn, which was an unhappy thing for this big state of California, particularly in the light of wanting to be the state that would swing it, which is a lot of malarkey anyway. Nevertheless, that's the way it happened.

Fry: But Knowland did try to get up there and change--

Jorgensen: Yes, my memory indicates that Bill was anxious to move. Here's an interesting sidelight to this convention. One morning at the convention before the balloting there had been considerable talk of Bill Knowland possibly being a vice-presidential candidate.

Fry: When did you first start hearing that?

Jorgensen: You'd hear it as you do in conventions, and even before conventions. Somebody--some newspaperman--says, "Knowland would make a good vice-president." So he becomes a contender, a man who may not have even considered it. But there was talk around in the delegation. I rode out to the convention hall with Senator Knowland and his father and Senator Knowland's wife. I remember his father pleading with Bill not to let himself become a candidate for vice-president.

Fry: Why?

Jorgensen: I can only guess that old Joe Knowland, his father, was getting along in years and probably wanted Bill to be closer to California to help manage their family affairs. Being a Senator he could get out, but being a vice-president would be more difficult. That's conjecture on my part, of course.

Fry: But at any rate, his father did not want him to be vice-president.

Jorgensen: That's right. His father asked him not to consider it.

Fry: Knowland would have been more likely as a vice-president for Taft than for Eisenhower?

Jorgensen: I'm in no position to give you an answer on that. I don't know.

Fry: Do you remember the contested delegations from Texas and Georgia and Louisiana?

Jorgensen: I remember it happened, yes, but I don't remember the details. It was a question of seating the rival delegations. Taft lost ground on all of those.

Fry: Yes. That's what made it look so certain for Eisenhower.

Jorgensen: That's right. The pro-Ike delegations were seated.

Fry: I just wondered if you remembered the discussion that went on in the delegation about that--if you could give us any clue about what the consensus was before the vote on the delegation, and if Nixon or Warren made any speeches to the delegation for either part of these contested delegations.

Jorgensen: I don't recall any speeches. There might have been, but I feel quite sure the governor didn't make any because I think he was trying to keep himself clear of any obligation one way or

Jorgensen: the other, or intended obligations or indicated obligations, so that if the deadlock developed he would be ready and available and clear. I don't recall anything else.

Frt: Do you remember Gordon X. Richmond?

Jorgensen: Yes.

Fry: He was a member of the credentials committee that handled this. When this came up to a vote on the floor of the convention, according to the proceedings, he made an appeal to the convention as a whole to vote for those pro-Eisenhower delegates. I thought maybe that might refresh your memory a little bit on what went on.

Jorgensen: I don't recall. I remember Gordon being there, of course, and participating, but I don't recall the speech that you're talking about. You realize that when you're in one of these conventions, you're not on the floor. You're moving around; you're talking; you are listening.

For instance, on Warren's behalf, because we had pledged to support him on the first ballot, and also because we're honorable people, we tried on Monday and Tuesday to get around the convention and talk to people about our governor and see if we couldn't build something. I did my proportional share of this. I didn't back away from it, even though I was not a warm friend of the governor. You don't listen to all these speeches. If you did you'd go out of your mind.

Fry: I think we know that now from the television coverage. [laughter]

Ike's Choice of Nixon

Fry: There was some newspaper account at the time that Nixon's selection as vice-president was the reward for the key part that he played in producing an Eisenhower-Stassen (of Minnesota) and Warren coalition, which forced through this change in the convention rules that enabled the contested delegations to pile up votes for Eisenhower. That was the Georgia and Texas votes.

Jorgensen: The newspaperman must have had two or three drinks to dream something like that up. I know nothing about it.

Fry: You weren't aware that Nixon was trying to get the delegations to vote for the Eisenhower contested delegates?

Jorgensen: No, I have no knowledge of it.

Fry: Do you know anything that you can tell us about the actual decision of Eisenhower to make Nixon vice-president?

Jorgensen: I think Herb Brownell, Tom Dewey, and Paul Hoffman were men who had Eisenhower's ear and who proposed Nixon as a possible vice-presidential candidate. You must recall now that Nixon was a rising young star in the Republican ranks. He had had two terms in Congress. He had gained national recognition because of the Hiss case. He was then elected in California taking a Democratic Senator's place. He was well and widely known. Eisenhower was undoubtedly looking for such a man who would appeal to the younger middle-aged voters.

At that time we were being double-crossed at every turn in the road by Russia and the Communist countries. I think that probably had something to do with Nixon's selection.

If I may deviate here a moment, I have a suspicion, more than a suspicion, that Eisenhower would take Nixon because he felt that Nixon was an astute politician. After Eisenhower was elected I was invited back on a few occasions to usually sit with Eisenhower in the morning and talk for a half or three-quarters of an hour about this and that and the other thing. On one occasion we discussed the possibility of the national chairmanship.

I remember the first night that I had dinner at the White House. Eisenhower was in the habit of having little stag dinners. He would have, oh, twelve or fourteen men. We'd go to the White House and have a nice dinner and then leave the dinner table and go usually into the Lincoln study or one of the rooms. Ike would sit himself in a big chair, and everybody else would gather chairs up in a kind of semi-circle. The butlers would come in and serve an after dinner drink or coffee and cigars. Then he'd just generally talk off of the record.

I remember the first such session we had. I was amazed at the ineptness of the president when it came to political questions; it bothered him. When I say political questions I'm talking about the day to day operations of government and campaigns and patronage.

As I was leaving that evening I was the last one to go out. He was in the foyer saying goodbye, and as I went by he said, "Jorgensen, wait a minute. You know Nixon pretty well, don't you?"

Jorgensen: I said, "I've lived with him for a while."

He said, "I think he has one of the keenest political minds that I know of," and went along to extol the political thinking of Nixon. He said to me, "When we're in cabinet meetings, when I have a political problem, I instinctively turn to him," which I thought was a fine endorsement.

But going back to the convention, I was up in the hotel we were thinking about--it's called the Stockyard Inn. The Nixon people had a couple or three rooms there where we could gather and keep reports moving and all this liaison work that goes on in these conventions.

We were sitting around up there waiting because Dick knew that his name had been in the pot for vice-president. He knew more than he was telling us, I'm sure, about the people who were espousing him. But we were waiting for the--and the telephone call came in that the nominated president, Eisenhower, would like to see him. That was the signal that he was the boy!

I forget who went down with him, one or two of us. I didn't go down. I had some other work to do there and I had to stay at the convention. But I remember when he came back we had arranged--the telephone call came through--so we arranged for him to come in through a side door. I remember coming into the convention hall with him. I have a picture around here somewhere that was taken when we were surrounding him, trying to get him in. He came back into the delegation and got quite an ovation.

Fry: In the account I read, he got a call at a very, very awful hour in the morning--like three o'clock or four o'clock?

Jorgensen: I don't remember the hour, but it was quite early. Quite late; let's put it that way.

Fry: Late at night. Was Chotiner around too?

Jorgensen: Oh yes, Chotiner was there. Chotiner was on the central committee. He was a delegate.

Fry: Was there any reluctance at all on Nixon's part to take the vice-presidency?

Jorgensen: I never noticed any. [laughter] No, not at all, not at all.

The United Republican Finance Committee

Fry: To move on into the election campaign, what was your role in that? According to my notes Chotiner was the manager of it. Is that right? They were going to begin a whistle-stop tour of the West Coast from Pomona on September 17.

Jorgensen: That's right. It started out in Pomona. Chotiner was manager. That is, he was the manager in the sense that he was riding with the candidate and putting it all together. At that time I was chairman of the central committee. I established a campaign headquarters out on Wilshire Boulevard. Bernie Brennan, as I recall, was the California campaign manager. [to Mrs. Jorgensen] Helen, you worked for Bernie, didn't you, during that campaign in 1952?

Helen: Yes, for a few weeks, Honey.

Jorgensen: I thought you did. That was on Wilshire Boulevard, as I recall.

Helen: Yes, it was on Wilshire Boulevard near Vermont.

Jorgensen: On the north side of the street, as I remember.

Helen: Yes, not too far from Bullock's-Wilshire.

Jorgensen: I had my hands full [laughing] as the chairman of the Republican Central Committee of Los Angeles. I had all the candidates to think about, and that was the year that we put in the United Republican Finance Committee. We were getting that organized, and were raising the kind of money we needed.

Fry: How was that Republican finance organization different from previous campaigns?

Jorgensen: A real finance committee as such didn't come into existence until 1951. Here again is a businessman's thinking. I knew we'd have to raise something over $1 million in that section to support the national campaign as well as our own finances. E.S. Hardwick acted as the treasurer. He was vice-president of the Carnation Company. Charlie Thomas was the national finance chairman. So I took it upon myself to see if I couldn't work out an organization that would raise the maximum amount of money the easiest way. I got ahold of people like Charlie Jones of Richfield Oil, Reese Taylor of Union Oil, Ed Valentine of Robinson Company, and many others. I got them together and told them what I thought we'd have to raise and the kind of

Jorgensen: money to support a campaign. I asked their cooperation to get it. I said, "Let's run this like we would run a business organization. I represent the political end of the business and the operating end, if you please. I will come before the board (or in this case, it will be the committee) and I will lay my budgets on the table. I will be willing to answer any questions you raise.

You will form yourselves into a finance committee called the United Republican Finance Committee. You will raise the dollars. I will spend them. But I will spend them only after you have approved the expenditures. So you appoint members to a budget committee which will meet once a week during the campaign." (I've forgotten how many members, say five or six or seven or eight members.) "I will then appoint on the political side an equal number. We will meet here in Mr. Hardwick's board room out on Wilshire Boulevard once a week for a meeting. I will report to you after you have examined the original budget, and I'll know what my cash flow has to be. You tell me you can meet it, or you can't meet it, or you don't think we ought to spend for this or that or the other thing. I will attempt to convince you that we should. Then we would take a vote of the meeting, and the majority rules. You've got as much weight on this committee as we have--political." This is something new, something entirely new.

Fry: You did have a budget to present in '48 at that meeting, I noticed.

Jorgensen: Always. But I'm talking principally about '52 now. You always prepare a budget. You have to have a budget.

Fry: I see. But it was quite a breakdown. I was impressed that at that point you did have a breakdown.

Jorgensen: You have to break it down. You see, one of the problems in a campaign--it's getting me off here for a moment--you've got to control your money. You don't know that you're always going to get it. You play brinkmanship. Only experience will tell you how much brinkmanship you can play. Or you can end up at the end of the campaign a quarter of a million or a half million dollars in the hole and no place to get it. I have always been a stickler for "know what you've got, what you think you're going to get within a conservative estimate, and by God, run your campaign like that."

Anyhow, this appealed to these businessmen. They said fine. So they went to work. The dinner in Southern California was one of the things we did, this big dinner I was telling you

Jorgensen: about, the United Republican $100-a-plate dinner for 4,200 people. That was part of United Finance. That money didn't come to me. That money went into the treasurer's office.

Fry: What treasurer?

Jorgensen: The treasurer of the United Finance Committee. That money was sent over to me as weekly I presented my cash needs for that week. It worked beautifully. We raised more money than we spent.

Fry: Fantastic. You said this was going to be the easiest way to raise the most amounts of money. Why was it easy?

Jorgensen: You know why? This was the very secret of it.

Take a fellow like Tom Pike, for instance. He'd go to his friend in the oil business. He was an oil supplier--pipe and all that sort of thing. He said, "Bill, I'm going to put $500 or $1,000 in. I think you ought to."

He said, "I don't know about political--"

He said, "Bill, I'm sitting on the committee. I know where your money's going to be spent. I have control over it."

"Well," he said, "I know you, Tom. If you tell me that, I ought to."

So, Pike could go to John Jones and get $1,000, where as a solicitor I'd be lucky to get $100, you see, because he had trust in Pike. We built this up. The finance committee was a good one. They said, "We're going to spend your money for you. We're not going to turn it over to Jorgensen, the politician, and these boys." It worked out beautifully.

As a matter of fact in that campaign, as I recall, there was a good surplus, after we finished up, left in the treasury. I said to my successor as the county chairman, "Don't spend it all at once. Use that as your nest egg to get ready for your next campaign." Well, the first thing I knew they had new headquarters, etc. [laughter]

Fry: Carpets on the floor and so forth. [laughter]

Jorgensen: It's easy to spend but sometimes hard to come by. Of course, in those days too, in running and financing a campaign you didn't have the stringent laws you have today about contributions.

Jorgensen: For instance, you could take an accounting firm. I had in that campaign my own auditor, who gave me a day-to-day report. I had it on my desk every morning, what we spent yesterday and how the bank account was. My auditor was always ten days ahead of me. Expenditures had to be ten days ahead. I could see them. So I could go to my finance committee and say, "Look, here they are. Here's where it's going."

Then we had one of the national audit firms (and I won't name it) who lent their aid to us to run a final audit. As I recall, in that campaign when we finished up the audit the first one showed we couldn't account for something around $700 out of over $1 million of money that was handled. I said, "Well, let's go back and check it again." They finally got it down to less than $100. You can't do that today. You have to pay for that service. That was given to us.

Take your advertising--I think it was in the '52 campaign, some of the finest advertising brains in Los Angeles were on the advertising committee. One day I just roughly figured out what it would cost a year to hire these men. It would cost a quarter of a million dollars a year.

Fry: And you had them for free.

Jorgensen: Nothing. Well, they didn't give full time, of course. For instance, if you could find somebody that would give you headquarters rent free. Furniture for instance--when you had a campaign, I'd go to various banks and insurance companies and say, "Can I go down in the basement and get all the old desks and chairs?" And they could let you use them. You can't do that now. You have to pay rent on furniture. You have to pay rent on the building. It's a contribution otherwise.

Fry: You have to count it as a contribution, yes.

Jorgensen: And contributions are limited now. If you've got a statewide campaign you can get those kind, but if it's a federal campaign there are different rules. So the cost of a campaign today is different than it was in those days. Of course, television is just a hog. It just chews up money fearfully. It costs so dang much.

Fry: I think it was Asa Call who told me that in the finance committee you had to work carefully with the p.r. people who were handling the newspaper releases because you had to put ads in certain papers in order to get coverage; the two had to work together to get the stories in. I wondered what kind of liaison

Fry: you had with newspapers. Or was it a loose enough organization so that you just naturally had the communication necessary to establish money for ads in newspapers, and the people who were sending out press releases and visiting the editors could work that way?

Jorgensen: Well, you had your press people, of course, visiting the newspapers. But the newspapers knew they were going to get ads. The old feeling used to be that if you gave a newspaper a lot of ad money, they'd endorse your candidate. That's a lot of hogwash.

Fry: Was that true in '50?

Jorgensen: Not true. Your big papers are going to be independent. The amount of advertising you give them is not going to make or break them by any means.

Fry: It sure won't. You had the Chandlers anyway, and the Camerons.

Jorgensen: That might work on a small, throwaway paper or something like that--these dodgers that go out and that sort of thing.

Fry: Or the weeklies maybe in California.

Jorgensen? It could be. But in your big newspapers that is a lot of malarkey.

Fry: Also I think it was Mac Faries who said that you have to be careful to always get a good representation on finance committees of the major business and financial interests and not leave out anybody so that you can get a good spread of support.

Jorgensen: It goes without saying.

Fry: Yes, but I'll bet it's hard to do.

Jorgensen: Not if you work through this finance committee. Take, for instance, Reese Taylor calling up a buddy in the oil business and saying, "You've got to come along with us and help us on this thing." We had Tom Pike in the other area of the oil business and Robinson in the department store business. We had a man in the trucking business, a railroad man. Sure.

Fry: And you were insurance. Did you function as a businessman too on this committee for insurance people?

Jorgensen: No. I was purely the politician this time, purely the guy that was running the committee.

Fry: Was Asa Call part of this?

Jorgensen: He'd been on finance committees, sure.

Fry: He was on this finance committee?

Jorgensen: Sure, he's been in United Finance. Certainly.

Fry: Would you like to put in right here some indication of Asa Call's clout? We were talking about it at lunch and I wanted to be sure to get it down because it doesn't quite come across in the interview that he gave me.

Jorgensen: You must remember that Mr. Call is now close to eighty years old. The old rascal that I'm talking with had a pacemaker in his chest; he's had broken bones; he's had broken hips. I think about everything's happened to that fellow that can happen, and he was in the office every day.

Of course, going back a number of years, he was a powerful figure. He had great respect in that area. The younger generations have come up around him, but in his heyday, back in the thirties and the forties, Asa Call was a man to be reckoned with in the business world in Los Angeles, and still is, as far as that's concerned. He was a confidant of governors and senators and presidents--a hard bargainer, but once he gave his word to you, you didn't have to worry about having it in writing. That's for damn sure.

Fry: Would he guarantee a certain amount of money for a campaign in advance and then go out and raise it? Or how did it work?

Jorgensen: I don't know the word guarantee. I think Asa probably said to candidates from time to time, "I'll raise you number of dollars if I can get it." He could usually get it all right, but I don't think he made any guarantees. If he did he was foolish.

Fry: I was wondering if you were able to get a significant amount of money from the medical segment, because the doctors at this point were pretty discouraged with Earl Warren since he had tried to put in compulsory health insurance.

Jorgensen: The medical fraternity had always been good contributors to political campaigns.

Political Campaigns: Then and Now

Jorgensen: But basically, Mrs. Fry, I always look upon political campaigns as a businessman. For instance, if I were going to make soap, how would I go about selling my soap? Well, I'd first try to get a fairly good product that would stand the test of the user. But the thing I would do is I'd advertise it. I'd use gimmicks--sales promotion ideas, I should say--and in this day and age, use television, radio. Then I would have to raise the money to do that. I'd either do that by funds that I would borrow or that I would raise through stock subscriptions and so forth.

Now the same thing is true in a political campaign. You've got a product; that's your candidate. You've got to sell him. First, you've got to get name familiarity. That's the main thing. That's what we used to do with billboards all the time--name familiarity. Get people to see that name--Bill Jones, Bill Jones, Bill Jones, Bill Jones. You had a bumper stripper--Bill Jones, Bill Jones. You had stickers--Bill Jones, Bill Jones. You had quarter cards--Bill Jones, Bill Jones. It's the old gimmick in advertising--if you say a thing often enough it makes an imprint on the mind, and the action will follow, without they have a very strong conviction to the opposite.

Think of the articles you buy because of that idiot box. They have drummed into your mind, your subconscious mind and your active mind, that this is the best damned product. So you go to the supermarket, and you're looking for a box of soap and you take this kind of soap because that stayed with you. You're not sure that it's any better than anything else.

Fry: Then how do you choose the main issue or motto or motif for selling that candidate? What's your criterion--something that is very simple and easy to remember?

Jorgensen: Yes, if you can. For instance, I remember in the regional congressional campaign that Nixon ran in 1946--and we picked this up somewhere--"Have you had enough? Have you had enough? Have you had enough?" We just drove that. We had signs and stickers and bumper stickers. "Have you had enough? Have you had enough? Have you had enough?"

People said, "Well, I guess I've had enough. I'll try something else." We'd had enough of the Democratic regime, Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Truman. Yes, let's try something; let's try something.

Jorgensen: Oh, you may say, "He has represented his people!" You search for it sometimes [laughs] to try to find it. Or, "He's been a good servant to the people!"

That, I think, is disappearing a little bit with the billboard. Billboards have gone out of political campaigns to a great extent. First, they're expensive. I recall, I think it cost around $125,000 to post California. Posting as I remember--it has probably changed by this time because I haven't dealt with it for four or five years--posting was considered to be about 1,450 boards. Of course, a lot of them are down alley ways and back off in corners of buildings. You always fought to get locations.

As a matter of fact in the old days (I don't think you can do it now because of the laws and such like) we used to take a survey, for instance, and pick out the boards we wanted--like a good board on a freeway, or a good board on an overpass. Then we'd go to the advertiser who was using that board and say to them, "Would you release your board?" We'd get a release, and then we would use it for thirty or sixty days.

We would pay the rent for it, except in some yesteryears when it could be done that companies might just donate the board. But you can't do that now, and I don't recall that I was ever in a campaign when we did it. We usually paid for the board. So the company that had the board was not out anything, except they'd let the board loose--let us have it--for a period of sixty days.

But billboards are going out, I think, because television gets into the home, and it catches the voter with your thirty-second spots, your sixty-second spots. Here again, you're driving home, "Vote for Mrs. Fry. Vote for Mrs. Fry." There isn't enough time to say very much during that period of time, but there's the picture, and if you've got a slogan there's the slogan. So, with radio and TV, for the same amount of money, you can plant more impressions in the mind of the voter than you can from a billboard.

Likewise, I think, the so-called bumper strippers. You don't see many in elections anymore. People hesitate to put them on because there's been too much vandalism. Partisan people come by and say, "Why, he's going to vote for a Republican. I'll bust his window in." So, people hesitate to put them on.

The same thing is true of what we called quarter cards. We used to distribute quarter cards to sit in store fronts. Stores don't take them so easily. You're sniping. Sniping is pasting something on a wall somewhere without permission.

Jorgensen: I think campaigns are going to more and more television and radio. Likewise, the day of the train trip and the trips across the country will be used less and less. A candidate can't really cover these fifty states of ours, but he can reach them by TV very quickly. The result is, I think, that campaigns to come will eat up practically all their money in media.

Fry: I think this campaign we're talking about now, this '52 campaign, was one of the last to use the train extensively.

Jorgensen: Yes, it was.

Fry: It's sort of historic, I guess, just in that sense.

Jorgensen: It used to be used where the candidate couldn't get out and he had to come, and so he'd take a train and then stop at every little whistle-stop. He'd be on the back platform and make an innocuous speech of some sort. A local politician would get on and ride to the next station and shake the hand. Then he went back and said to the people, "I shook the hand of the man."

Fry: Yes. Of course, the impact of that is just tremendous--to actually meet the candidate in person.

Jorgensen: Well, a lot of people think so.

[end tape 3, side 1; begin tape 3, side 2]

Jorgensen and President Eisenhower

Fry: I wanted to go back to an interesting little tidbit that you dropped when you said that you would go back and talk to President Eisenhower.* Was this in any official capacity in the Republican party?

Jorgensen: No, I think Nixon probably had something to do with it because one of the first White House visits I had--I got a call. I was in Florida at a meeting. I remember lying out on the beach. Of course, my associates--this was a company affair--were aware that I was interested in Nixon. This was after Nixon had been

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*For further discussion of Jorgensen's relations with Eisenhower see pp. 92-97.

Jorgensen: elected vice-president. A beach boy came along and said, "Mr. Jorgensen, the White House is calling. Mr. Jorgensen, the White House is calling." So that set up quite a fuss.

Fry: [laughing]

Jorgensen: So I went to the phone, and the president's secretary, Miss Whitman, asked me if I was going to be in Washington, and if I was, the president would like very much for me to come in and see him, and if I could arrange to have dinner. I hadn't the slightest idea what he had in mind.

We had quite a chat. I must have talked with him an hour in the morning. We were talking about campaigns. He reminded me that on his first political trip as a candidate to Los Angeles he was nearly knocked out with a bale of shredded newspaper that came down off the top of a building.

Fry: My God!

Jorgensen: When you arrange for your candidate to come in you arrange to give him a welcome. These welcomes are not always spontaneous; you work on them. So, we had picked Eisenhower up at the Long Beach airport when he came in. There were good crowds on the way in. We started out at Spring Street. The Young Republicans had gone on top of the buildings. In those days we didn't have anything in Los Angeles above a twelve-story building because of earthquakes. The Young Republicans had taken bales of shredded newspaper, which is used for packing purposes, and opened them out. Then they would throw this out, as though you had confetti floating in the air. But somebody forgot to loosen it up enough, and a big chunk flew down. Eisenhower said, "By golly, it plopped along beside of me. It just missed me." [laughter] But we had a nice conversation, and I was there for dinner that night.

Fry: What was he wanting to talk to you about? It still isn't clear to me.

Jorgensen: Just general political things.

Fry: And the lay of the land in California?

Jorgensen: Yes, as a matter of fact, he did. But, I went along to the later meetings after Warren had gone onto the Supreme Court and Goodie Knight had become governor. The president said to me [laughs], "You know, when I cross the state line in California I think the governor expects me to bow down three times facing west."

Fry: [laughter] Because Eisenhower had finally arranged for Knight be to governor.

Jorgensen: The next time I think I was in was near the end of his first term--I don't remember. Anyhow, I got a call asking if I would come in. He'd like to talk with me. He asked me if I would consider taking the chairmanship of the Eisenhower Volunteers, which is what I always call a private campaign organization. Every candidate seems to have it. I'm not sure how effective they are. But it's a hoopla group. Walter Williams of Seattle had been the first chairman. They had enlisted the young people, and they had had rallies and that sort of thing.

Fry: You mean the ones who carry the banners and make all the noise?

Jorgensen: Yes, and the little girls dressed up in the straw hats and the skirts and so forth. So I talked to Eisenhower about that, and he arranged for me to go up to New York. He said, "If you're going to New York, I'll call Cliff Roberts." Cliff Roberts you know today as the man who's the real leader of the Masters golf tournament down in Augusta. He was a good friend of Eisenhower. So I went up to New York and talked to Roberts and a couple of other people. I came back home. I was living in San Francisco at that time.

Fry: What did Roberts do in this?

Jorgensen: He was a backer of the Eisenhower Volunteers and the president.

Fry: Money. I see.

Jorgensen: Yes. I came back to California. It took me about four days to write a letter to the president saying that I did not wish to take on the position. If you ever have a letter that's difficult to write, it's writing one to the president telling him you won't do what he's suggested that you do. But I indicated to him I thought I'd be more effective in California. But basically I just didn't believe in this organization. It seemed to me it was siphoning off needed money that didn't produce very much in results.

The Need For Centralization in Campaigns

Jorgensen: I was always a stickler, even when I was chairman in Los Angeles, that the Republican organization be the only organization, and that they don't splinter out and lose all the power that comes from that. I don't mean political power but I mean campaign power.

Fry: Workers--man hours, you're talking about.

Jorgensen: That's right. I can remember very definitely--and I'm rattling around; I suppose it's what you want--on the first Eisenhower campaign the chairman of California for the Eisenhower Volunteers came to Los Angeles. Charlie Jones of Richfield Oil had a little luncheon for him. Of course, I, being the chairman of the party organization, was invited over. The name of this chap slips my mind. He was a stockbroker here in San Francisco, I believe, at that time. He gave a glowing speech about what the Eisenhower Volunteers would do.

When he finished, Charlie looked at me and he said, "Frank, have you got anything to say?"

I said, "Just one thing, Charlie. When the Eisenhower Volunteers come to Los Angeles I want them to come through my front door at the office, because when they try to come in and organize independently, we're going to cut their legs off." Charlie got pretty incensed at me. I said, "We're working to raise the kind of money we need to run a campaign. We can't siphon it off for a bunch of kids to dress up in straw hats. They waste our money, without effectiveness. I can get the straw hat girls and the kids to do this, and we don't have to spend the kind of money that we're envisioning here."

But I believe in that. I think if you have a strong organization that you ought to control all of the activities in the campaign so that it's coordinated. It saves the contributor considerable dollars.

Fry: In California, where often campaigns are run independently, where each candidate is out collecting his own money and running his own campaign, you must have had a lot of trouble with this, because there were so many Republican candidates cross-filing and running independent campaigns. Right?

Jorgensen: You get the contributor. Here's a contributor, for instance, who is in a position to contribute a fair amount of money; let's say $100 to begin with. Now, he'll put $100 into the total campaign. You get $5 from this one and $10 from this one. It doesn't accomplish what you wanted to do, because if you can coordinate your campaigns, a lot of work can be done that you pay for once.

For instance, you might have a slate of campaigns. I'm talking, say, within a county or within a congressional district. You might have an assemblyman; there's usually two or three assembly districts and a congressional district. You have those

Jorgensen: and you have your congressional candidate. It would be better if you could run that as a consolidated campaign with a consolidated headquarters, all in one headquarters here, and if you have store fronts down here, all in one store front. A good deal of your advertising is slate advertising. Now candidates will generally shy away from this because they want their own pictures; they want their own campaign. It just wastes a lot of money in my opinion. When this goes on the record I'd better delete it, because a lot of politicians don't agree with that.

Fry: I hope you're not just putting down things you think everyone will agree with. [laughter]

Jorgensen: I'm not. But yes, separate contributions do cause problems. That's what we tried to correct in the United Republican Finance Committee. I think earlier in our discussion I explained that finance operation to you. I found that the candidates could devote more of their time to actually campaigning rather than trying to raise money. I thought also that it put him in a position of being independent of the contributor, because it all went into one pot. Of course, people on the other side say, "It brings power. If you control it here, with this money all in the hands of one small group, then they can choke off." Well, there's that possibility too. I think you have to have it balanced.

But it seemed to me, the way we ran it in '52 in Los Angeles, we had good balance there and it was properly accounted for. Money was wisely spent, and every nickel was accounted for.

Yes, it does create problems with all candidates seeking money. It's going to be particularly difficult now with the new laws in, where your large contributor is no longer able to make a contribution to your campaign in that sizable amount.

Fry: Yes, it looks like they're going to have to give you cut-rate television.

After the train ride to the national convention what else did you do in the '52 campaign?

Jorgensen: I stayed in Los Angeles and worked my tail off raising money and directing an organization. I didn't do anything on the national picture at all.

Fry: What organization?

Jorgensen: The Los Angeles County Republican Central Committee. Believe me, that took all my time.

Fry: You were raising money for the national campaign?

Jorgensen: National campaign, senatorial campaign, congressional campaign. We had seventeen congressional men running in the county and twenty-four assemblymen. I was busy making speeches and pushing the people out to get the necessary funds to set up a precinct organization. As I recall it--don't hold me to these figures, but I'm close--in 1952 there was roughly ten thousand-plus precincts in Los Angeles County.

I had two fellows by the name of Smith and Tremaine. Smith was an aircraft executive, and Tremaine was a lawyer.

Fry: Do you remember Smith's first name?

Jorgensen: Walter Smith. He worked for Lockheed, I think. I can't remember Tremaine's first name. I'll think of it. Those two, without compensation of any sort and with one paid employee, organized, staffed and had the operation of better than 8,700 precincts.

Fry: They must have been whizzes.

Jorgensen: They were wonderful organizers, and they worked their tails off. I helped them because I was at their behest to speak as the chairman. But they actually had precinct operations--precinct captain, workers, and material. They did a magnificent job. It only goes to show you, if you get people who are dedicated to the job and have the ability, it can get done.

Women in the Republican Party

Fry: What role did the Republican women play down there? I think in San Mateo County and in Kern County they were terribly active.

Jorgensen: We used them to the fullest extent. I remember the dinner that I mentioned to you, the first $100-a-plate dinner that was given down there where we had 4,200 people in the Shrine Auditorium at $100-a-plate.

Margaret Brock, who has been very active in Republican politics, bless her soul, and to my knowledge has never seeked anything in return, was the women's chairman. To put this dinner over we wanted to sell tables in blocks of ten seats--$1,000. So Margaret said to me one day, "Let's make a social affair out of this."

Jorgensen: I said, "What do you want? A fashion show?"

She said, "No, but let's see if we can't put a connotation that it's socially right to attend this affair."

And so we did. I remember she went to Adolph Menjou (the movie actor, as you recall), and we had a number of them. Margaret got them to appear at luncheons and such like. We launched this over at the California Club one day at lunch. I was to make a little speech as the politician, and Adolph was to charm the girls, which he could do.

He came in immaculately dressed, as he always was, with his winged collar and so forth (incidentally, was a very pleasant individual, very interesting person). So I got up and give them the necessity, what this money was to be used for. Then Adolph got up and just really charmed them. These women then went out and took it upon themselves. I think one woman sold nine tables.

Fry: Oh, that's $9,000.

Jorgensen: Nine thousand dollars. They just did a beautiful job, and we had a nice party that night. Dinner was a very nice affair.

Fry: Did the women also do a lot of this precinct work that was organized?

Jorgensen: I used to say in these talks I gave out in the district, "God bless you women, because you're the shoe leather that makes campaigns work." Groups would come in to sell the women on precinct work. I said, "You know, it's a natural thing for you girls. You've had some new families move in. You don't know anything about them, do you? But now you can go ring the front doorbell and say, 'I'm the precinct captain, or block worker.' You get in, and you can look around, see what kind of furniture they've got, how well off they are, how many children they've got, and you'll know all there is to know about the neighborhood very shortly." I used to kid them.

Sure, the women did 99 percent of the precinct work. You couldn't get men to do it. You could get men to act as supervisors or captains or something, but women did the job. Oh yes. You couldn't run a campaign--you can't run a campaign today without women.

I was talking to a candidate running for statewide office the other day. He said, "What do you think we ought to do?"

Jorgensen: I said, "I think we old guys could sit around and give you a lot of counsel and advice, but it seems to me, with the money situation such as it is today, that you're going to have to run a very lean campaign. You're not going to be able to raise the $2.5 to $3 million that it takes to run a statewide campaign." I'm talking about both the primary and the general election. You cannot do one in California under the method that has been done.

He said, "What'll we do?"

I said, "You've got to go back to the old days. You've got to get your supporters fired up in the boondocks to the point where they will organize up to their teeth to do precinct work. Those people have got to go door to door and sell your campaign, or you're not going to be elected."

And I believe it, because I don't think a candidate is going to be able to raise the kind of money needed in light of what's happened politically, the milieu we've been in. The people have lost their faith in the political structure of this country, to a certain extent, and some of them quite a bit. I know tried and true Republicans who say, "Oh, the hell with it. I won't have anything to do with it this time." I know some of them get the fever before the campaign gets underway. They can't stay out of it. But it's going to be difficult. I think we're going to have to go back and start doing the shoe leather again.

Fry: When the 1952 campaign was going on there was one of those radio spot announcements--or maybe it was television; I don't know--that came into us written on yellow paper here, with some emendations. It's an announcement that Nixon apparently was to put on the air. You can read that. In the script, he says, "Hello folks, I'm Dick Nixon, your United States Senator" and he goes on to ask them to support the Earl Warren delegation in the June 3 primary. This came into us from some San Mateo County campaign materials. Although you weren't in San Mateo County then, I thought you might just be able to explain this and that you might remember if Nixon ever did record a spot announcement on behalf of Warren and whether it was actually aired.

Jorgensen: I don't know. I don't really remember this, but I wouldn't be surprised that he did, because I think up until the time of the convention he had taken a position that he would support the governor of California. But I think that probably very shortly before the convention Nixon had become convinced that Eisenhower looked like the candidate. He was in Chicago for a few days before he came out to Denver to meet us.

Fry: This would be related to the battle against the Werdel delegation, which was before the primary.

Jorgensen: Wouldn't your radio stations have records of that?

Fry: They might. I don't know. Radio stations really don't keep records very long.

Jorgensen: I don't recall it, Mrs. Fry. I wouldn't be surprised that it was made. I think probably it was sometime before the convention.

Fry: I judged that this was after you had all formed the delegation but before you went to Chicago. I mean it was before the primary. The primary was June 3 so this could be April even.

Jorgensen: That's right. You see in the primary you're voting for a delegation pledged to--

Fry: Warren.

Jorgensen: That's right.

Fry: Which was a distinction.

Jorgensen Says No to Two Presidents

Fry: After '52 could you tell me what role in the Republican party you considered. You mentioned that Eisenhower had talked to you about possibly chairing the national organization.

Jorgensen: That was the Eisenhower Volunteers at that time.

Fry: It was?

Jorgensen: Yes. You see, your memory plays tricks when you don't keep a history of this. I told you about getting the call down in Florida. What I was being looked at at that time was the question of being the national chairman.

Fry: Of the Republican party.

Jorgensen: Of the Republican party. I had, as I say, a nice chat with the president. He didn't bring the subject up, but I was tipped off by Nixon's office that this was the possibility. After talking to the president he asked me to go over and see

Jorgensen: Summerhill. Summerhill then was the postmaster general. He broached the subject of whether it was possible that I might consider public service. All the time we knew what we were talking about.

Fry: Oh. [laughter] But he kept it in general terms.

Jorgensen: That's right. I recall that I indicated that a position without compensation would be very difficult for me because I was not a wealthy man and I had to work for a living, and that if I took any job or position it would have to be compensated for. He indicated that there would be no problem there. I think he indicated to me that a previous chairman--I believe a Mr. Roberts from Kansas if I'm not mistaken--was compensated by the national committee. I then told him that I didn't think I'd like to take a salary if I were doing work for the party.

Fry: Why?

Jorgensen: I had a fetish, and I guess it was wrong. I thought to take money for working in the Republican party organization was wrong, that everyone should be willing to give of their time and effort to bring about a better party organization. I recall when I became chairman of the Los Angeles County Republican Central Committee in Los Angeles a check came over to me from the treasurer's office for $25. I called up and asked what it was for.

They said, "We give the chairman $25 a month for expenses."

I said, "I'll send the check back to you, and don't ever draw a check on county funds to me again."

They asked, "Why?"

I said, "I have two reasons. In the first place, $25 is peanuts. I expect to spend considerably more out of my pocket. It will cost me to have this office. I'm willing to pay that as my contribution. Secondly, I don't want any record ever to appear that I was paid for what I did in political work, because I never have been." I never have. I've never taken anything at all except expenses when I've had to travel and that sort of thing. I properly feel that they should pay that. That was my basic feeling.

I had a position, Mrs. Fry, with my company which at that time I would have had to give up, because my company was dead set against its employees being involved in politics. I think we talked about that earlier.

Fry: I think that was just over lunch, though, about the time you got called on the carpet.

Jorgensen: Yes. As a matter of fact, in the 1952 convention, a few days before we were to go to Chicago, I got a call from the vice-president who was my immediate superior. He said, "Are you going to the convention?"

I said, "Yes, I'm going to be a delegate."

"Why don't you come into New York?" That's where our head office was located.

I said, "I don't have anything to come to New York for. It's going to be hotter than hell in Chicago, and by the time we get through with a week of that I'm ready to come home." As the conversation went on I realized that I was being commanded but in an easy way. So I finally said, "Well, do you want me to come?"

He said, "We've made a hotel reservation for you." [laughter]

So, I went into New York after the convention. I went in to see this vice-president, who was very friendly to me. We always had been. But he didn't even ask me to sit down. He said, "We're going up to see the president." We walked into the president's office. He didn't even ask me to sit down but started to upbraid me because of my political activities.

I listened to it for a while and finally said to him, "Mr. President, I think as a citizen I'm doing something that has to be done. I don't take any money out of it, I'm not running for public office, and it's not impairing my ability to carry on the company's business, as is evident by my record these years. I think you're being damned unfair about it."

With that, my vice-president grabbed me by the elbow. He said, "Frank, we're going to leave now." [laughter]

We went out, and on the way down to his office I said, "Am I fired?"

He said, "I'm afraid that you might be." But fortunately I wasn't.

Now the attitude of the company has changed completely. They urge their people to actively participate in political endeavor. They say to them, "If you do and you're elected to public office, you can come back to the company. We'll have the job for you."

Jorgensen: But in my day, if I had taken this political job, I would have had to resign from the company. I was a young man on my way up--I hoped--and it eventually worked out that way. I would have forfeited all that. It was too big a loss for me to take, at least I felt so.

Fry: It must have been a terribly black, black moment after you talked to the president.

Jorgensen: Well, I always kind of took a little pride in being able to say that I've said to two presidents, "I won't do what you asked me to do." [laughter]

Fry: The president of the United States and the president of your company. I bet you were a little shaky, though, after you finished. [laughter]

Jorgensen: I must admit, Mrs. Fry, it took all my letter writing ability, plus a couple of people in my office, to get the phrases to fit right in the letter to President Eisenhower, because I really had quite a bit of trouble putting that one together.

Private White House Dinners

Fry: Have I exploited you completely on you and Eisenhower? I don't want to leave out any important presidential stories here.

Jorgensen: The only thing I can say is I think he invited me back over the years to either four or five of these small dinners. As I've explained to you, at one we talked about becoming chairman of the Eisenhower Volunteers, and the other was a feeling out of my ability or my willingness to consider the national chairman.

I'm not sure I would have gotten the national chairman. I saw Len Hall later. Len was then going out of office as national chairman. He said, "I was disappointed to hear that you rejected the chairmanship of Eisenhower Volunteers. I didn't know Len. I got better acquainted with him after I moved to New York, but he evidently had some interest in my accepting the chairmanship of the Eisenhower Volunteers.

The other trips were just small dinner parties, usually to see the president in the morning and talk about this and that and the other thing.

Jorgensen: But I remember so well his distaste for what I call practical politics. I recall one dinner. I arrived a little late, the last one there. The usher brought me upstairs to the oval study where he usually met his guests and had a cocktail or two. When he saw me he came over. He was pretty red-faced. I learned later, watching him, that when he got mad the blood started to rise from his neck up. I could see that he was disturbed.

He said, "Jorgensen, I'm glad to see you. Come on, I'll get you a drink." So we had a drink. But he didn't lead me back to the group that was standing around yakking. We looked at some things that some governments had given him, like a jeweled sword from Saudi Arabia or something like that. Then finally he said, "Gentleman, why don't we go down to dinner."

Ordinarily when he wrote you a little note inviting you to dinner he'd say, "I'm going to wear a black tie, but come as you please." Of course, naturally you always put on a dinner coat. But this one character came in. I'm not sure if he had boots on, but he had an old green suit on that looked like it had been in the cedar chest for a while. I won't identify him for obvious reasons. It wouldn't be fair. But he came from a western state.

We sat down to dinner; a very lovely dinner we always had. But this fellow was sitting practically across from the president on the other side of the table. Charlie Thomas was there.

This man kept yelling down from the end of the table, "Now, Mr. President, by God, you've got to do this and you've got to do this." I could see that it was bothering the president. He would try to ignore it, but this character just kept right on going. A number of us tried to break up the conversation.

So after dinner we went in to another room to have cigars and talk. This character took the floor. What he was concerned about was patronage. He hadn't got the patronage. He just couldn't get the patronage. His Senator wouldn't let him have the patronage.

Finally the president took enough of it and he in his language, which he can use as an ex-army man, which was very spicy, proceeded to tell this politician that he was going to run the government as he saw the way to run it, and he wasn't going to give any credence to any damn politician that was worried about patronage. He really laid him in the aisle. There was no clapping by the rest of the guests, but they all wanted to cheer that the president laid him low.

Jorgensen: But those were the days when Sherm [Sherman] Adams was the watchdog at the White House on problems having to do with political problems--he and Dick Nixon. Sherm had the day to day problems. If you wanted something, if you wanted to talk about an appointment, you would go to Sherman. Sherman, of course, was an old hand on the hill. He knew what he was about. This is what Nixon missed in organizing his organization as president. Sherm was tough, but he was fair. You either got a "yes" or "no" and that was it. There was no use appealing it any farther.

After Adams left the president then had to address himself to the political situation and became, in my opinion, a pretty astute politician in a short period of time. I kidded him on one of the trips after this had happened. I said, "Mr. President, you're getting to be a pretty good politician."

"Well," he said, "I didn't think I like it, but now that I've got to do it, I get a little fun out of it once in a while."

Fry: You said Sherm Adams was the political watchdog on day to day problems. Nixon, I gather, was also a sort of political aide and sensor and planner for Eisenhower.

Jorgensen: Remember what I said earlier about Eisenhower's remarks.

Fry: Yes. But were you differentiating here that Adams was day to day and Nixon was more long range?

Jorgensen: I think so, yes. That's what I meant to infer.

Earl Warren's Supreme Court Appointment

Fry: Did Eisenhower ever talk over anything with you about candidates or appointments or anything like that? Did you ever hear him mention what he felt about Earl Warren a few years after he appointed him?

Jorgensen: It's interesting that you should bring that up. I never could understand--of course, I was not a great admirer of Earl Warren. I thought he was a decent individual, sure. But his thinking sometimes, and some of the things he did when he became a Supreme Court justice, didn't sit well with me. Maybe I'm too conservative. I think perhaps he was a little more liberal in his thinking than I would be. I didn't agree with some of the things that he did.

Jorgensen: For instance, this integration thing. God knows we need to bring about integration. But the Warren system of shoving it down the throats of the American public as roughly as has been done or was tried--and now we're seeing that the colored folk themselves are commencing to resist some of these things--seemed to me pretty drastic.

I thought that it would take time and education for the black population of ours to assume the correct position in society. They had not had the opportunity, I must grant, in the southern states, of equal opportunity of education. But to my way of thinking, education was the main thing. I don't think you can legislate citizenship by laws. I think you have to do it so that it may take two or three or four generations to do it. Then there will be opportunities for them as far as employment is concerned.

Anyhow, I often wondered why, because Eisenhower did not owe Warren a blessed thing as far as his election was concerned. Warren, in my opinion, was ineffective in the campaign. He did some speeches and traveling, but I don't think he had a great deal of weight. He certainly didn't help in the convention. Warren held off to the last minute hoping that he could get a nomination himself.

I asked Nixon. I said, "Why?" He never gave me a satisfactory answer. After Eisenhower was out of office they had a birthday party down in Hershey, Pennsylvania. I went down with Tom Dewey and a planeload of New Yorkers. I was living in New York then.

We were having cocktails out on the porch of the old Hershey Inn there. I said hello to the ex-president and was chatting with him. I was just about on the point, "Now I'm going to ask him directly," and somebody come up and engaged him in conversation. I couldn't get back in the position. But I had my courage worked up to the point that I was going to say, "What in the world caused you to nominate Warren to the Supreme Court?" But I never did.

I'm not sure the Warren court will go down in history as earthshaking. I must give the ex-governor credit though. He was an exceedingly good leader. He had pretty near an unanimity of opinion on this subject that I was just talking about. But anyhow, that's the background. I never did find out why.

Fry: You don't have any ideas now on why he was appointed?

Jorgensen: Oh, I suspect Bill Knowland. Bill was the leader of the Senate, and I think Bill probably had a good deal to do with it. Bill owed Warren the fact that he was in the Senate. He was a Warren appointment. I expect there probably was as much influence there as anyplace. Paul Hoffman might have had some influence, I'm sure.

[end tape 3, side 2]

V LATER CAMPAIGNS: 1956-1968

[begin tape 4, side 1]

Selecting California Delegates to the 1956 Convention

Jorgensen: You've got the '52. You want the '56 now, the second term of office. Was that convention in San Francisco?

Fry: Fifty-six? I believe so.

Jorgensen: Sixty was in Los Angeles, wasn't it? Yes. That's when Kennedy was nominated. Fifty-six was in San Francisco because I was living in Hillsborough. I had moved up from Los Angeles.

Goodie Knight was governor. That delegation was put together up at the Mark Hopkins Hotel. I know it caused a little trouble here in San Mateo County because I was appointed the delegate. After all, I had only lived in the county--not too long. It lifted some eyebrows, but nevertheless I was an old-timer.

Fry: Was Goodie Knight the nominal head?

Jorgensen: I'll tell you a story. The delegation was picked. Basically we had three factions. There was a Knight group, a Knowland and a Nixon. Chotiner came up here as a Nixon representative. They set the Mark Hopkins Hotel as a meeting place to select members of the delegation. Each group submitted the names they wanted on the delegation. After some bargaining back and forth--

Fry: You mean Knight and Knowland and Nixon each gave their names that they wanted on the delegation?

Jorgensen: That's right. It finally worked out that this would be the delegation that would represent the state. In the meantime Mr. Knight and Mr. Nixon weren't seeing eye to eye by any means, although Dick tried to calm Knight, who was a prima donna.

Fry: What were they differing over?

Jorgensen: Well, my dear, politicians are like children sometimes or old ladies. They get incensed about a thing and they start a feud and there's no real reason to it. Basically, this started between Nixon and Knight--they were both jealous of each other, of course, as politicians are--at the Los Angeles airport one day. Nixon came in. I believe he was then Senator, or he was vice-president. Anyhow, there was a bunch of us out to meet him at the airport, and Knight came out, of course.

Goodie Knight had the greatest faculty of getting himself smack-dab in the middle of a picture. I've watched him work, and it was amazing! There'd be five or six individuals to be in a picture, and Goodie would get himself in the middle every time! He was an artist at it; he really was. And I've watched him do it.

Anyhow, in this picture--they were taking some pictures just after Nixon got off of the airplane. There was a bit of elbowing, and Goodie got elbowed out of the picture. He raised hell about it. I can remember he was madder than a--left the airport, got in his car and left in a hurry. That started the feud.

Fry: You mean he was elbowed out of the picture?

Jorgensen: Yes, or elbowed out to the outer edge. He was incensed about it, anyway. As I say, there was a jealousy there. Then the supporters of each side would feed fuel to this feud.

The delegation met at the Palace Hotel to form itself into a formal delegation. There was much yakking. "We're not going to have Knight as the chairman of the delegation. By God, we're not going to have him." And Knight had some people that were screaming. So, it was arranged that Knight and Knowland and Nixon would go upstairs and sit down and see if they could solve this thing.

Fry: Oh, really? Just by themselves.

Jorgensen: That's right. I said to Dick, "I'll wait for you down here by the elevator and you give me the tip-off." As they got off of the elevator, Dick said, "Talk to Bill [Knowland]."

I said to Bill, "What'll we do?"

He said, "Go ahead and do what you want." Bill knew what I wanted to do was to really dump Knight, because I wanted Bill Knowland to be the chairman of the delegation.

Jorgensen: We went into the meeting room, and parliamentary procedure started to move. But I quickly got three people lined up to make the motions I wanted. Knight was told by his supporters that he was going to be dumped because I had told them I was going to dump him now in favor of Knowland.

Knight got up before the delegation, and he just pleaded with them. He said, "Don't do this. Don't take me out of this picture. As the governor of the state, I--" and so forth and so forth. Then the camps broke up. One group met over in this corner, another group over here [gesturing], another group over there. There was much yakking and going back and forth of emissaries.

They came to me and I said, "No, I'm still set. Dump him! Right now. Now's the time to whip him. That's my politics. If you're going to whip a guy, whip him!"

Nixon came over to see me and he said, "Frank, let's don't do this. Let's try to create some harmony if we can, and please don't push it."

So it finally wound up that the Knight people started to leave the room, and Knight pleaded for them to come back. They finally came back in, and we finally fixed it so that Knight was head of the delegation, which amounted to nothing because Eisenhower was coming up for a second term.

Then we met out at the Cow Palace. Of course that convention was just a normal convention, normal amount of yak--speeches. Nothing exciting happened that I can recall. Eisenhower and Nixon were nominated for the second term. Because I had moved from Southern California, I did not do a great deal in that campaign. I had just taken on a new job in San Francisco and was devoting a great deal of time to it. There wasn't any question but what Eisenhower was going to be elected the second term. That's about all there is to the '56 campaign.

Campaigning for the Presidency, 1960

Jorgensen: Now the 1960 campaign, when Nixon ran against Kennedy--here again I had just been shifted by the company to New York. I was on a new job. I had the responsibility for the production of our group sales organization in both the United States and Canada, which in itself was a pretty demanding job.

Jorgensen: I went down to Washington on two or three occasions and sat in on some meetings. I sat on a committee in New York that Maurice Stans, John Lodge, Walter Williams and so forth started in the fall of '59 to raise some necessary funds to allow Nixon to go into the primaries in the early spring. In the actual campaign I was not able to do much except in the last month or month and a half. I made some trips into the Middle West on specific problems.

Fry: Was this in the general election?

Jorgensen: Yes, general election. But in total, I did not do very much in the '60 campaign.

Fry: What were those specific problems?

Jorgensen: Personnel problems. More or less, most of them were factions fighting each other. I went, having had some experience over a long time. I could go in and say that I was there at Mr. Nixon's request, and sit down with these people and see if you can't put it together before it grew out of hand. That's about it. Nothing of any skullduggery that I can report.

Fry: This was your first campaign in which you were in kind of a nationwide organization, wasn't it? Before this you had always been limited to California?

Jorgensen: That's right, and not much in this one. I can't take any credit for doing very much in the '60 campaign.

Fry: I wondered if you did a lot of the fund-raising in California for the national campaign?

Jorgensen: No, not that campaign. I think that's about it. Let's move along. Of course, Kennedy beat him by the Chicago and Philadelphia vote.

Fry: Did you confer with Nixon much during this campaign?

Jorgensen: Not a great deal, no. I saw him in New York, and I'd see him in Washington. But no, I didn't. I really wasn't in the campaign to any extent.

Fry: I want to ask you one more question, though. Did you happen to talk to Nixon about whether to participate in the debate?

Jorgensen: Yes. I had one discussion, and that subject was in it. I said to him, "Don't do it." He listened to some amateurs. All of us who'd had any experience said, "Don't do it."

Fry: He was such a proven debater. How did you know that he shouldn't do it?

Jorgensen: You can't use this entirely, but basically a politician who's in office should never debate his opponent. He ignores his opponent as much as he can, because he has to defend something. The opponent can make the most outrageous charges, but if you're on a platform, you've got to answer him. Some of the statements an opponent will make are not answerable because they're just plain lies.

I thought at the time that no purpose would be served by these debates. Here again, Mrs. Fry, it becomes my mistrust of the media. I've always distrusted the media, and my distrust certainly worked out in this case because they really worked him over.

Then, basically, while he was not the incumbent in office, he was the vice-president and he had to answer for the Eisenhower years. Regardless of how much you appreciated Eisenhower (and I thought he was a fine gentleman; I enjoyed knowing him), I didn't think he was a particularly good president. I think there was a lot of things that he let go. He didn't want to stir up the water.

Likewise, as a president he was not prepared, in my opinion, to deal with the domestic problems which were arising. They were starting to come up. We were starting to see the outgrowth of the Roosevelt years when we started all of this basic welfare work and all of these things that are now costing us billions of dollars and eventually will bankrupt the government if we keep on. He didn't do anything about those things. I don't mean by that they should discontinue them, but to commence to channel them and to control them where they had not got out of hand, as they have at the present time.

Nixon was in the position of having to defend that record, so he was an incumbent in a sense of the word. I could see no reason for him to debate this young Kennedy, because Kennedy was in a position to level charges, level charges, level charges. And that's what he did. Richard knew better than this, but he listened to wrong advice who said, "Oh, this would be a great thing." The debate killed him.

Fry: Who gave him the advice to do it?

Jorgensen: Oh, some of his friends in the media. I can't name them for you. Some of the latecomers in politics who'd never been through real tough campaigns. Of course, his inherent feeling was that he was vice-president and that was it.

Fry: As vice-president he could always manage to win.

Jorgensen: Sure. As you get into that rarefied atmosphere, you become practically proof-free in making mistakes or wrong thinking or bad thinking. You're now endowed with a gift that Jesus Christ only himself could give to you. This is the arrogance that the position breeds, that power breeds; it really is.

Fry: Yes. That's a classical pattern, isn't it?

Jorgensen: Sure it is. It's interesting to see. I watched him as he came up the line and more and more very much sure, sure that, "I know the answer, I know the answer." Nobody knows all the answers by any means. He has to listen to counsel. He has to listen to advice. Then he has to be wise enough to take the right kind of advice.

Fry: [laughing] He gets plenty, I guess, too at that level.

Jorgensen: Well, that's that on the 1960 campaign.

Jorgensen Chooses Not to Head Nixon's 1962 Gubernatorial Campaign

Jorgensen: Now in 1962 he ran for governor, didn't he?

Fry: That's right. Were you in on that?

Jorgensen: I'll give you a story about that. It's an interesting one. Dick was out here in California getting ready for the campaign, and I was in New York. I had a call from our financial vice-president. He said, "Frank, when are you going out to California?"

Fry: This is your company?

Jorgensen: Yes. I said, "Harry, I'll be going out one of these days. Why?"

He said, "I understand you're going out to run Mr. Nixon's campaign for governor."

I said, "That's a rumor, of course. I haven't even talked to him about his gubernatorial campaign. I haven't seen him for some time. I don't know anything about it."

Jorgensen: Then Len Hall called me. Len said, "Frank, I'd like to talk to you. I've got some ideas for that campaign out in California before you go out."

I said, "Len, where did you get your information?" He told me. I said, "Len, I haven't even talked to him. Come on down and have lunch with me." So Len came down the next day at the office and we had lunch.

He said, "It's pretty well rumored around there that you're going back out and take on his campaign."

I said, "Len, I'm not going to do it. I can't do it." So, I thought, "Well, I'll get ahold of Dick one of these days and talk to him."

I didn't think anything about it till the president of my company called me. He always called me Jorgy. That was always my nickname. But this time he said, "Mr. Jorgensen, if you have time I would like for you to come by the office."

I said, "Right away, Sir." He was a kindly man and we'd never had a harsh word between us. But I could see he was disturbed about something.

He said to me, "I think you should talk to me before you leave the company."

I said, "I think I know what you're talking about. Somebody's told you that I'm going out to California."

He said, "Yes. You know, we don't want to discourage you, but we brought you back here and we have some plans for you. You'll have to resign, but of course you can come back."

I said, "Mr. President, I will now get some dope on this thing because--" and I recited it to him that Harry had talked to me and my other friend, the ex-chairman of the national committee.

I went back to my office and I got a hold of Mr. Nixon, who was out here in California. I said, "There's a plane leaving this afternoon at about four thirty. I will be on it. Have somebody meet me at the airport." They did. As a matter of fact, Rose Woods met me. We drove out to Beverly Hills. He'd rented a house.

This was in the fall. I remember there was a fire in the fireplace. We sat down and started talking and had a drink. I said, "What about this?"

Jorgensen: He said, "I thought if I came directly to you, you'd back away. I thought maybe I'd get some friends to kind of urge you to come along."

I said, "It can't be done."

He said, "Why not?"

I said, "In the first place I'm now living in New York. I have been out of California politics." This was 1962, so I had been four years out of California and actively out of politics for probably six or seven years. That's number one. Number two is that I can't economically afford to leave my job and to spend a year. That's what you want. It will take a year through the primary, through the general election. No, I can't do it.

"There's a third reason. Your opposition, I think, would have a lot of fun and make big capital out of the fact that you had to go out of the state of California to get a chairman, a senior executive of the biggest life insurance company in the business, to run your campaign."

He didn't take kindly to any of this, and we got into an argument. When he and I have had some confrontations, we use some four letter words to express our feelings. Anyway, I left and things were not happy. The next day I got a telephone call asking if I would meet again. I did. Same results. We left at that meeting pretty much both disturbed.

Later on during the week he telephoned me, I think in Seattle, and said he was sorry that we had disagreed on this thing and perhaps I was right and asked who would I recommend for chairmanship of the campaign. I gave him some names that I thought would be good people. He didn't select any of them. But that's beside the point. So that's my total contribution to his gubernatorial campaign in 1962.

I understand later--I've talked with some people who worked with him; I'll not name them--but they said they were having one hell of a time, I think, to get him to take counsel and advice and so forth, and that I had been the one individual in the days when I was out here that could stand toe to toe and eyeball to eyeball, give and take, and he sometimes would listen to me. This had happened because I never wanted anything that he could ever give me. I wasn't seeking public office or anything of that sort. So I always could be pretty independent.

As a matter of fact, I was known in some circles an an irascible son of a bitch.

Fry: I see. That means independent, doesn't it? [laughter]

Jorgensen: [laughter] I guess so. Anyhow, that was it. So that's the end of the gubernatorial campaign.

Then, as you recall, he came to New York and joined the law firm of Mudge, Rose and so forth.* I would see him. He and Pat took an apartment up on Fifth Avenue, which was only about three blocks from the apartment I had over on Third Avenue. I would see him from time to time. Then, as I previously recited here, I was on a committee in the early fall of 1967 to raise finances, to make plans for the primaries.

Campaigning for the Presidency, 1968

Jorgensen's Key Role in California

Jorgensen: I retired on June 1, 1968, and immediately moved back to California. I received a call from Tom Evans, which was one of the members of his law firm whom I'd known, asking me if I was coming to the convention in Miami. They had reservations and they would set aside space for me. I asked Tom what they wanted me to do. He said, "Well, the boss just thought you'd like to be here."

I said, "Tom, it doesn't make any sense for me to come. He's got the convention locked up. There isn't any question in my mind. As long as he keeps Strom Thurmond holding the Southern delegation and the Southerners in line.

Fry: This was the '68 convention.

Jorgensen: That's right. I was saying to Evans that I had been in Miami in August and I didn't care for it. I'd just gotten out here and Mary and I were just establishing our home and I wouldn't come down. I wouldn't go to the expense of it.

So then, the next thing I hear, I get a call--will I come to San Diego. After the convention was over the whole group came out to San Diego to confer for a week or ten days and set

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*In the spring of 1963 Nixon joined the firm Mudge, Stern, Baldwin, and Todd (later Nixon, Mudge, Rose, Guthrie and Alexander; later Nixon, Mudge, Rose, Guthrie, Alexander and Mitchell).

Jorgensen: up a national campaign. In this group were John Mitchell and Bob Finch and Haldeman--the group that eventually got into the campaign.

I went down and we had a meeting on, I believe, a Sunday morning, at which the Californians who were in attendance were going to have a meeting to form the California organization and campaign. It had been decided that Dr. [Gaylord] Parkinson, who lived in San Diego and who had been a very successful Republican state chairman, would head the organization. However, when we met Dr. Parkinson didn't attend. I think efforts to reach him by telephone were unsuccessful. Then the word came through that he wasn't about to take on the job. I haven't been able to firm up this idea. I think what happened was that a few days beforehand he'd had a confrontation with Mitchell, or others who were heading up the national campaign, and decided to have nothing to do with it.

Anyhow, Bob Finch acted as the chairman of the California meeting. After the meeting he said, "We'll talk to Mr. Nixon," who then asked who was going to head up the California campaign. They turned to me and said, "Will you do it?" Now, keep in mind that I had been out of California for ten and a half years, plus the fact that I wasn't active probably to any extent the previous four years, which is really about twelve to fourteen years. Keep in mind also that this meeting took place around September 1, 1968, and you've got two months to election time.

Finally I said, "I'll do this: I'll act as coordinator"--call it what you please; we finally decided it would be chairman of the executive committee--"providing Mr. Finch takes the title of chairman of the state campaign." This was agreed upon. My reasoning for this was, with the time so short that I would feel that I would have to call upon the former Finch-for-Lieutenant-Governor people to form the nucleus of the campaign organization for California. Bob Finch agreed with me on this point. There was no money available at this time. Nothing had been raised. No finance organization had been organized.

We fought like a dog to raise enough money to do it. We gave Nixon roughly 50 percent of his plurality. We gave him 224,000 votes plurality in California. That was half of what he got in all the fifty states together. He won nationwide by less than half a million votes.

Fry: So California really put him in there.

Jorgensen: If he hadn't have had California, he wouldn't have been in there; let's put it that way. [laughter]

Fry: Why wasn't there anything left over from the primaries in the way of organization? Was Nixon's organization nonexistent in the primaries?

Jorgensen: Practically so.

Ronald Reagan and George Wallace

Fry: The delegation was another nominally headed one, headed by Reagan, who said he was not running for president. [laughter]

Jorgensen: But the delegation was a Nixon delegation.

Fry: Was it? Because underneath, Reagan was really running too. He was putting in a lot of effort.

Jorgensen: Oh, sure. I'll deviate here. In my opinion Reagan listened to some bad advice. Some of his people counseled him that he would be in a good position. Keep in mind that Reagan didn't have too much experience with these national conventions. When he got there he got a bad thumping, because there was no support for him at all. Nixon had this thing tied up. When I say "tied up" I don't mean to use that word in any sense except to suggest that Nixon, in the years that he was out of office, had worked diligently for the Republican party. You've got to give him credit. He'd go anyplace, make any speech, anytime, anywhere.

Now, the true politician doesn't forget those obligations. So who runs the conventions? The conventions are controlled by your state chairmen, your big county chairmen, and your big city chairmen of the Republican party. Those are the nucleus of it. They appreciate when a guy comes out and fights for one of their candidates. Likewise the candidates--all congressmen--are members of a delegation, members of the convention, and they don't forget the help that you give them when you work for them.

So, Dick had all of these notes owing to them. All he had to do was ask for them and they were there. Nobody could take that convention away from him. As you noticed a moment ago, I said as long as the southern tier of states were in hand, he's got it! No question about it.

Reagan made a very bad mistake, in my opinion, in letting his underlings tell him that he could be a prime candidate. I don't think that he would have been a bad candidate. But at that convention he didn't have a chance.

Fry: Could you tell me what Finch's position was in relation to Reagan or Nixon at this point?

Jorgensen: With Nixon. No question about it. You see, Reagan and Finch didn't get together well. It's according to whose side of the story you listen to. But here you're going to have a lieutenant governor that felt that he wasn't being consulted by government at all--that the governor was ignoring him entirely. I suppose that Reagan felt this, being a politician.

You see, in that election, when they won the election, Finch had more votes than Reagan did. He ran a hundred thousand or more ahead of Reagan in the state. This is a sign. These politicians see these things; they smell them; they feel them. They get it in their gut, and they never get it out. I suspect that's had something. No, Finch has always been a Nixon man. There's no question about that.

Fry: And you feel that most of the members of that delegation were Nixon men. Was Rockefeller a problem at all in this state?

Jorgensen: No, I don't believe so.

Fry: What about George Wallace? That was his third party here.

Jorgensen: That's right. Wallace was helping us probably more than hurting us.

Fry: I wondered how he was perceived at that time.

Jorgensen: In some of those Southern states I think he was more of a help than he was a deterrent because he was taking away.

Fry: From the Democrats.

Jorgensen: That's right. But none of us ever felt that he had the power to ever be elected. At least I didn't.

Going back then to the '68 campaign, we started and Finch was chairman. I was up about ten days later after this meeting in San Diego, and Finch said, "Now you're chairman."

I said, "Where are you going?"

"Well," he said, "Nixon wants me to go on the tour with him."

I said, "Fine. I'll go with you, because I'm not going to take the chairmanship."

Jorgensen: "Why not?"

I said, "It's a very simple thing in my book. I've got to lean on the notes that are owed you. You've got a lot of friends in California. If you're not the chairman, I can't go to them and get the support I need, the workers I need, the organization I need, and the money I need."

We argued about it awhile. I said, "You keep the chairmanship title, and I'll ramrod this thing as chairman of the executive committee," which entailed financial responsibility as well as organization. We had to raise some money quick, which we did--some good friends did.

Fry: Was this Asa Call and Harrison McCall?

Jorgensen: Yes. So then Bob Finch and I persuaded Asa Call to head up the financial operation and raise the kind of money that we needed. We had a very thin campaign. Having mounted and financed a campaign in a matter of sixty days, there's a question as to how--to be frank--about how effective it is. You just can't take a big state like this and organize it in that period of time and get back the kind of results you want.

The results of the election were Nixon received a 214,000 plurality in the state, which was roughly half of his total plurality in fifty states.

Fry: You don't think it had anything to do with how good a campaign you carried out? [laughing]

Jorgensen: We can't take any credit for it all. We ran a campaign. We did the best we could in the period of time that was available and the amount of money that was available.

Some Needed Reforms

Jorgensen: Raising that question, I'm not sure that campaigns contribute to the election of a man too much. Today with the idiot box where we can reach all people--everybody has a television set practically or a radio set--I'm not sure that campaigns and the kind of money we spend in campaigns is just worth it. Frankly, I'm not.

Fry: You mean you're not sure whether the television campaigns are worth it?

Jorgensen: The television--that's your campaign.

Fry: Yes. But that takes an awful lot of money.

Jorgensen: It sure does. It eats it up like a monster. But all the other extra activities--the public appearances, the advertising in the newspaper. You go into these dailies and you're talking about a full page and costing $5,000 for one insertion or more, and weekends it would cost you another five, six, seven, or eight hundred dollars more.

Another thing too, Mrs. Fry--these campaigns of ours are too long. That causes us to spend too much money. Some of these days--we're trying in a clumsy sort of way to limit the money intake. But here again, regardless of what laws you have for contributions, smart operators are going to find ways around it. It just stands to reason that they will. It'll put the brakes on them to some extent. This taking a dollar from your federal income tax--that's for the birds. That isn't going to work.

Fry: Why?

Jorgensen: If I was an incumbent I wouldn't want my opponent to be financed out of the public funds. Make him work for it.

Secondly, the length of the campaigns. This, I think, is where we've really got to do it. England does it to some extent. We should limit our primary campaign to a period of sixty or ninety days at maximum and the general campaign to sixty days. No candidate should spend a dollar prior to those campaigns, and they should limit the number of dollars he's going to spend in the campaign.

Then a time will come when these fat cats who operate that idiot box are going to force themselves into a position where they're going to have to give free time to candidates. They're coming to it. It's coming. The atmosphere is getting ripe for it, and people are getting ripe for it. So they're going to have to set aside time. I think this will happen. Our campaigns in the past have been just too much money, too much time, too much effort.

Fry: You were saying that when you started this campaign on September 1, which gave you two months before the election, that it was difficult to organize a state as big as California in two months.

Jorgensen: It's impossible!

Fry: So what do you mean you think the cqmpaigns were too long?

Jorgensen: Well, organization is another thing. You're not actually campaigning when you're putting an organization together. You're getting the people who will act at the time the campaign operates.

Say we had a primary of two months or three months--I think the primary should be three months--you can start building your organization months ahead of that time. I can come to you, Mrs. Fry, and say, "We're going to start a campaign next spring, and I want to act as a chairman of your precinct. You start getting four or five women who will work with you." I've expended no money to do this, I've given no material, but I've got a commitment, so that when I come up to the beginning of that ninety days I've got counties organized, I've got communities organized, and I've got precincts organized. I can save money doing this too. [tape off]

Importance of Volunteers

Jorgensen: I've always had a feeling that in campaigns, you get better campaign results if you've got volunteers who are dedicated people who believe in what they're doing. Modern thinking, however, seems to be to get money, hire people. This last presidential campaign I observed coming into our headquarters here in the Bay Area one after another, smart, for the most part fairly long-haired, classily dressed with sport coats, young experts on salary by the national campaign headquarters, who were telling the volunteers what to do and how to do it.

I've been in this business long enough to know that if I'm a volunteer and I've come from my home and I've maybe hired a babysitter to sit with my baby and I've taken my car and used my gasoline, and then to have somebody come in here who's been paid a nice salary (and expense accounts, of course, that run out of your ears), I'd say, "The hell with it! I'm not going to be told by this kind of character."

On the other hand--as I mentioned to you a moment ago I used to brag about this that I never got paid for anything that I did--I could say to the volunteer, "Look, I'm in the same position you are. I happen to have a position that's the boss, but I don't make a damn dime out of this, and I'm not paid. I do it because I believe in it." Now they worked for me.

Jorgensen: Then the secret of getting volunteers to work is somebody doing something and you go along and say, "Mrs. Fry, you're doing a beautiful job."

Fry: Right. You'll do anything for those strokes.

Jorgensen: Now what you will get as the overall chairman is credit for things you didn't have a thing to do with because you were able to get Mrs. Fry to do the job. They forget this. The average chairman thinks, "I've got to be recognized." He makes a mistake, until he's worked with some great people and praised them. They'll work their tail off for him.

Fry: Sure, and the esprit de corps that comes from this is probably the source of a lot of energy in a campaign. What you're saying about these paid people that come in is--

Jorgensen: They're as ineffective as dimples on a boar pig. [laughter] Pardon my expression.

Fry: That's the effect they have on the people below them or working with them. Does this make a difference in how a campaign is carried on with the mark of the candidate and the people who are above? In other words, wouldn't this detract from the influence of those on the finance committee who hired these men, and maybe women, to come in and be the experts in various phases of the campaign? It seems to me that it would turn over some of the direction of the campaign to these, because they're experts who are supposed to know all about it.

Jorgensen: Sure, the direction of the campaign is turned over to them. Certainly. I've had some real fun with them. I'll go even further than that. Hiring so-called campaign experts--there's a bunch of them grown up. Here in California they've had a good feeding ground because of these initiative measures we have. They make a lot of money on that. I won't name the firms, but you know them. They hold themselves out as being experts in running campaigns. I see the kind of money that's paid to them. I say they're much overpaid.

Give me the chairmanship of an operation. Let me hire one man, as a Murray Chotiner, for instance, who I thought was one of the best organizers and expeditors in a political campaign that was ever born--you may not agree with his philosophy, but he got it done--a man like that, and pay him maybe some salary. I don't need all these other characters who are just spending money out.

Jorgensen: I think the American people are sick of this money business. They're not going to put that kind of money in. The average worker isn't going to do it.

[end tape 4, side 1; begin tape 4, side 2]

More on the 1968 Race

Dealing With Republican Factions

Fry: Do you know very much about why [George] Romney withdrew in the primaries of that campaign?

Jorgensen: No.

Fry: Nixon entered a number of primaries and came out with very high percentages in a lot of them. In some of them he was unopposed. Do you think that this was necessary?

Jorgensen: No.

Fry: Primaries do seem to sap a lot of money.

Jorgensen: Sure they do.

Fry: I wondered how Nixon's support lined up along the lines of the various Republican factions which developed four years earlier when Goldwater ran [1964] and when Reagan captured the governorship [1966]. There was a Rafferty-Kuchel contest going on here in 1968 for senatorship that was very hot and divisive in the Republican primary. Could you tell us how this affected the Nixon campaign? Was one group more pro-Nixon than the other, or did you try to unify them?

Jorgensen: We tried to ignore them, I remember very definitely. I was careful as I could be, keeping in mind the time element, to not engage a heavy supporter of either of those candidates in our campaign. We tried to just run our own campaign and ignore the other candidate.

Fry: In your volunteers did you try to balance it and get as many of one as another?

Jorgensen: No, I don't think we consciously did. I think we avoided getting a red-hot, someone who supported one candidate or the other in our headquarters. I don't recall but maybe one incident where candidates tried to move into our headquarters when we had to move a person out.

Fry: Did Nixon remain neutral on the [Thomas] Kuchel--[Max] Rafferty fight in the Republican primary? Kuchel was the incumbent U.S. Senator who had developed a certain amount of seniority in Washington, and he lost to Rafferty.

Jorgensen: Nixon didn't take an open stand on it.

Fry: Do you know how he felt about it really?

Jorgensen: No, I don't.

Fry: It was looked upon as a sort of disciplinary action by the Republicans against Kuchel.

Jorgensen: No, I don't really. I could guess, but that wouldn't be worth putting down. What's your next question?

Fry: There were some other groups like the California Republican Assembly and the United Republicans of California. I thought maybe you could tell how these all--

Jorgensen: They were all pro-Nixon.

Fry: Then what was the source of any opposition that you had to deal with?

Jorgensen: In the state of California, where you're a three to two registration, to win a Republican campaign you've got to have a lot of Democrats come over to join you. The lunatic fringe and the very liberal element of the Democratic party we couldn't hope to reach. They were on the Governor Knight's--we're talking about '68, though, aren't we? Yes.

Fry: Yes. This was Humphrey--the Humphreyites.

Jorgensen: Honestly, as far as the state of California, my answer to you awhile ago, there was just 224,000 more people wanted Nixon than they did Humphrey.

Support From the San Joaquin Valley

Fry: I was reading a book yesterday after I called you, which had a chapter in it on the '68 convention. I'll enter this into the record. It's by Delmatier, McIntosh and Waters, called

Fry: The Rumble of California Politics.* Their analysis says that Nixon won because Humphrey did poorly in the nine counties that are usually Democratic in the San Joaquin Valley. Humphrey lost Kern, Tulare, and San Joaquin Counties, and in the rest of those nine counties his margin was so low that it didn't offset Nixon's margin in the traditionally Republican counties. So, I wondered if there had been a conscious effort made to capture the Valley Democrats.

Jorgensen: Oh, yes. In '68 I had a pretty good organization out of Fresno and on up the Valley. They worked very hard. As I recall, we had economic conditions too that at that time were in our favor. Nixon had taken positions on certain of the issues affecting agriculture which those ranchers up there liked. And the McClatchy papers, which control that area up there, were not vehemently anti-Nixon. They weren't supporting Nixon, but they weren't taking him on.

Then, of course, we had the big metropolitan dailies which get circulation through that area. I think that had more to do with it. Humphrey didn't catch on out here; his organization wasn't too much. We got an awful lot of blue collar voters. They were coming in our direction then. Then, of course, in the '72 campaign they came over completely because McGovern was completely off his rocker.

Fry: The main issue in those Valley counties in 1968, I think, was the threat of the organizing farm workers at that time, which Humphrey came out for. I suppose Nixon--

Jorgensen: Dodged it.

Fry: Dodged it or came out against it.

Jorgensen: Moved around it. Pat it on the back and then give it a kick.

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*Royce D. Delmatier, Clarence F. McIntosh, and Earl G. Waters, The Rumble of California Politics, 1848-1970 (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1970), pp. 404-406.

Choosing Issues

Fry: When you read the old newspapers the main idea was to bring peace and stop the riots here at home. It seemed like Nixon's campaign said, "We want peace and we want to stop the riots here at home, which we'll do through better enforcement of law and order." Humphrey on the other hand was saying, "We want peace and we want to stop the riots at home, and I propose 1-2-3-4-5 and on this other matter 6-7-8-9-10"--very specific ones. Nixon never answered Humphrey on these very specific things, or he never countered with his own very specific proposal.

Jorgensen: He didn't have to.

Fry: Why did you think he didn't have to?

Jorgensen: Just a question of judgment--reading the public's mind. Nothing more.

Fry: Do you mean that it was enough just to know that this is what Nixon had in mind, as he would proceed into the presidency, without knowing how he was going to do it?

Jorgensen: His broad statement was sufficient for them. As you go into a campaign you have people rushing to you and saying, "Are you going to answer him on this? Are you going to answer him on that?" It's just a question of your judgment. You've got your ear to the ground. You're listening and you're getting reports in from around the state. You say, "Now forget it," and walk away from him. You may guess wrong. Occasionally you do. But it's just a question of political judgment. This judgment doesn't come out of a machine. It comes out of a feel.

Fry: What kind of feedback did you get? Did you have constant polls?

Jorgensen: Oh yes, we had polls. But I got most of my information--I'd be on the telephone to my county chairmen, those which I had figured had good judgment. I'd call them up and say, "John, how are things this morning?" Then I'd have a little tab list of things that were current and I'd remind him. I'd get an answer from him. I'd do that for twenty or thirty counties, and I'd have a pretty good feel of what the feeling was on the daily issue. Your candidate gets it too as he moves around, because the local people will talk to him. If he sees a thread here, he can see.

Jorgensen: Of course, a good politician, a man who remains in office, has an ability to understand what the public wants before they ask for it. He knows what they think. I'll tell you how he does it. They give you a lot of fancy answers and that sort of thing, but it's just the ability to think ahead. Not that he's a great thinker, but he picks up their thinking and he can project it and be ahead of them. Now if he's ahead of them, he's a good politician.

Fry: Then when he suggests it everyone recognizes this is what they want. [laughing]

Jorgensen: That's right. He takes full credit for it.

Fry: In the 1968 campaign you were getting this feel. Did you pipe this in turn into the national campaign frequently?

Jorgensen: Sure, we'd have conversations. I'd say, "Out here, we think we're hearing this. If the boss cares to comment on it, fine."

When he came out on his trips to campaign here, we pretty well had localized for him. He'd go up the Valley and speak on agriculture. He'd speak favorably on points there. In the city here [San Francisco] he'd talk about this or that or the other--stopping the war, peace, and too much crime. The theme of the thing is always the same, but you highlight it as you come into a community or an area.

Fry: I gather from what you're saying that you simplify the message.

Jorgensen: Sure you do. People with a master's degree in political science, well, yes. But a true politician, the guy that's been through the mill, can succinctly say it in two seconds. They'll take two pages. [laughter]

Rebuilding the Candidate

Fry: There was an effort to project a new Nixon in '68. Here was a candidate who really hadn't won an election on his own right for eighteen years. I wondered if that really worked--if you feel that that was an important ingredient.

Jorgensen: I'm sure it was. We made suggestions about his personal appearance--shave. One of the great problems was to get that black beard off of his face. You'd have to shave him about three or four times a day to keep the beard down and powder him

Jorgensen: because we put him on camera. With a day's growth of beard, if he hadn't shaved since morning, he looked like a gangster! He'd be black as could be; he had a very black beard.

Oh, I'm sure there were suggestions about what you should wear; there always is. And certain language and certain cliches he might be in the habit of using--discard them and so forth. Those always come in a campaign. I don't know that there was any great effort. I didn't see any great effort to rebuild the man. He was the same man.

He was rebuilding himself, as I mentioned earlier in our conversation--a succession of offices, first to Congress and then Senator and then to vice-president and now a candidate for president. He had built and become more knowledgeable because of the jobs that he had and the effort that he made, the work that he did to improve his knowledge, particularly in foreign affairs. Yes, it was a different man. Bound to be.

Fry: Did he really seem different to you? I remember Nixon said in one of his early statements in this campaign that he felt he really was different, that he had gone through a certain amount of psychoanalysis in New York and had read some philosophy and so forth. Did you find him essentially different, besides what you mentioned awhile ago, the perhaps arrogance that he picked up in public office as vice-president?

Jorgensen: Oh yes, he was different. You see, as I knew him before he was ever in public office, he was never a man that was given to small talk. Like stories--men get together for a drink and tell stories. He never participated in that. He didn't seem to have time for it. His mind was somewhere else. Eating and that sort of thing never seemed important to him in the early days. He was satisfied with a bowl of chili or a hamburger or meat loaf or something of that sort.

As I've said to some of my old friends who were disappointed when they met him and couldn't sit down and reminisce about the past, "This man is too damn busy. He's president. He doesn't have time to sit down. He's working all day long." It's a hell of a job.

Fry: It sure is. Eisenhower had his golf for recreation. Did Nixon have any hobby like that?

Jorgensen: I don't think he had any hobby except politics. He played a little golf, and so I guess he played a fair game.

Fry: I guess he liked football. [laughter]

Jorgensen: He liked to watch football games, and baseball maybe once in a while for public appearances. No, I never knew of any hobbies he ever had.

Fry: Did you and Nixon get along better in this 1968 campaign or did you find it a little more difficult? If you were the--what did you call yourself?

Jorgensen: The irascible son of a bitch.

Fry: [laughter] Did you and Nixon have this same relationship in this campaign that you'd had in previous ones?

Jorgensen: Oh, yes. Although I didn't see an awful lot of him because I was busy in California. When he came to California I was with him on these appearances. There are those people who head up operations who want to hold on to the sleeve of the candidate and appear on the platform with him because that's what they need. They have to have it; that's their pay. Or they have in mind public office and they want to get exposure. I never had that urge. So it was perfectly all right with me if he got on the platform and I was in the back room counting the money or somewhere trying to get something done. As a result, I didn't seek to be with him. As far as the campaign was concerned, he felt it was in capable hands, and certainly we never had any interference with it.

Washington Job Possibilities

Jorgensen: After the campaign was over and I was in New York he was very appreciative of the job that had been done and went out of his way to say so, even to the point of asking me what I might want down in Washington.

Fry: Did you want anything?

Jorgensen: No. As a matter of fact, I was visiting with him in New York before he was inaugurated. We were chatting and talking about the California campaign and how much he appreciated what we'd done out here. He said, "What do you think you want?"

I said, "I don't want anything."

He said, "Don't you want to come down and join us in Washington?"

Jorgensen: I said, "No. I just retired and I've moved back to California. I worked hard all my years and I think I'd like to enjoy life a little bit. Now, if you're talking to me as an old friend who's worked for you and you're trying to find the way to pay me, you can't do it because I don't need it. But as President of the United States, if sometime you feel that there's a job that I can do and I'm qualified for, I'd give it serious consideration." He took me at my word and never asked me after that.

Fry: And never suggested a specific job?

Jorgensen: No.

Fry: What sort of specific job would you have liked?

Jorgensen: None. As a matter of fact, when Mr. Finch was going to be appointed the HEW chairman, he asked me to come down and work with him in the transition period, which might indicate it would lead on probably to something else. I said, "I don't want to get in that can of worms--118,000 employees." He found I was right because he left there.

No, I had no desire to. I knew enough about Washington to know that in these jobs back there you work at them. If you're around the White House--a friend of mine, George Murphy, suggested that perhaps I ought to be on the staff. I said, "That's something I wouldn't touch with a ten-foot pole, for the simple reason that I'm too old. I can't take the pounding. I can't be on call eighteen, nineteen, twenty hours a day, which the staff is. That takes somebody that's a little bit younger than I am, and I'm not going to try!"

I probably could have put up with it for a little while, but I didn't have to. There was nothing back there that appealed to me. I've had offers before to go back. Charlie [Charles Erwin] Wilson, who was secretary of defense, asked me one time when I was back and had a meeting with Charlie Thomas and Tom Pike. They said, "Why don't you come back and join us?" I said, "Oh, the hell with it."

Fry: What did he want you to do?

Jorgensen: Who knows? Get into that operation. But I've always, I think, been able to make a fairly good analysis of my own ability. I was always a salesman and dealt with sales, and I didn't see any place in government where a salesman could operate.

Fry: So you've always avoided, then, getting caught up in the "Peter Principle"? Going beyond where you would be happy.

Jorgensen: What's the use? What do you get from it? If you can't make a contribution to your government, then why hold a position, just to hold it and say, "I was undersecretary or I was secretary or I was this." That doesn't make any sense to me. That doesn't buy any groceries at the grocery store.

Winding Up the Campaign in California

Fry: I think this campaign wound up in California, or at least it had one of its final big blows here. You must have been terribly busy organizing that. There was one in San Jose and one in Los Angeles.

Jorgensen: Yes, we had a nice big meeting in San Jose at the stadium there.

Fry: I didn't get to read up on that beforehand, but as I remember, there was a riot or danger in San Jose and an investigation afterwards on whether the rioters were real or imported.

Jorgensen: That was an earlier meeting. Nixon always took precautions. The last time he was in San Jose--that was in the '72 campaign, I guess--I went up to the hotel and rode down with him. Then we came down the highway with an entourage and police. We got into the stadium, came around the back way, brought him into the athletic building, and held him there until he was to appear. There was no trouble that time, but we had security around up to our ears. You never can tell what some kook is going to do, as we've seen happen. I've never seen Nixon show any fear of crowds, never at all. I've never seen it. But I take caution.

Fry: I think everything in '68 was sort of volatile.

Jorgensen: That was when we were having so much trouble with these colleges and campus riots. There was an unrest. He was the recipient of it. He'd gone through this, hell, when he was down in Peru, Venezuela, and Chile.

Rose Woods was talking to me when I saw her--I usually see her when I go back to Washington and talk to her. She's still back there. She said, "You'll never know what it is to be in a car and have these angry people trying to turn your car over,

Jorgensen: trying to break the window. We just fear for our lives. And you know, the boss was just as calm as could be. He wanted to get out of the car, and the Secret Service men wouldn't let him out. He said, 'Let me out. I'll talk to them.' They wouldn't let him out." So he's not afraid of crowds. He never has been.

Fry: Were you ever with him when anything like that happened in California?

Jorgensen: Oh, yes, I've been to meetings where we've had--I remember one time in San Mateo. I guess it was in the '68 campaign. We had a meeting down here at a school. There was a little group up in the back, and they tried to harrass him. There was one particular one. I asked three of our big boys to go up and see what was the matter with him. Dick was on radio and he had said, "When this is over I want this young man to come up and have his say." So when the radio was shut off my associates just took this fellow by the arms, without any manhandling, and simply took him down on the platform. He gets down, but he won't go on the platform.

I said, "Now, say what you have to say. You have a right to say what you want to." He wouldn't do it, so our fellows then left. The police grabbed him and right on out the door he went. He was just there to raise a fuss. There always are hecklers around, but you choose to ignore them. You have to ignore them.

Fry: There were charges made, I think in the '68 campaign, that some of the hecklers weren't real. Do you remember that?

Jorgensen: What do you mean, they weren't real?

Fry: I think it was the San Jose meeting where--

Jorgensen: You mean the Nixon people set it up themselves?

Fry: Yes, as I remember--this was in the headlines at the time.

Jorgensen: Why would a candidate risk what might come out of such an affair by asking or even paying people to raise a riot at one of his meetings. Doesn't make any sense. No.

Fry: Did you have anybody else come into the state, like Goldwater or anybody like that, to help the campaign along here?

Jorgensen: Oh, sure. In this last campaign there were a lot of surrogate Nixons. Sure. Every campaign you have them come in. I don't even recall who it was.

Fry: I think this is about my last question. When Spiro Agnew was selected after Bob Finch didn't want it, as I understand it, for vice-president--is that your understanding? You look doubtful.

Jorgensen: Well, that's the story. I can't deny it or not affirm it I think it's possible that Nixon did offer Bob Finch the vice-presidency--because Bob had been a good, solid supporter of his. I've never talked to Finch about it, so I don't know, and never talked to Nixon about it. So I can't tell you.

Fry: Did Agnew come into the state? At first he was kind of a problem as a speaker in his unfortunate selection [laughing] of words referring to ethnic groups. I wonder if you remember having to deal with Agnew and his speeches.

Jorgensen: I don't recall, but I do believe he came into the state.

Staff Spending Excesses

Fry: We could check that out in the newspapers, but I just thought maybe you remembered how you had handled setting him up.

Jorgensen: No. In those sort of things the candidates have their own advance people come in. The only thing was as chairman of the campaign I had to be sure they didn't put me in debt up to my ears so that I couldn't get it out, because these campaign organizations live pretty high on the hog. They leave some real debts behind them when they come in to visit your state.

Fry: You mean just the travel expenses?

Jorgensen: Travel expenses. You see, all these nicely paid people have never lived so well in their lives. So they have nice thick steaks for breakfast and bottles of liquor. I've even had them come in and leave a hotel, and the hotel manager would call up and say, "We've got some specialty shops here. We have some bills for blouses, trousers, and belt buckles," and they were charged to the room. I'd say, "Fine. That's your problem, not mine. I won't pick up anything."

I remember one--without naming him--went up to the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco. Dan London called me and I said, "Dan, I'm sorry. I'm not picking up those expenses. You get them from that operation itself," because they just go hog wild.

Jorgensen: Here again, they're young people and they think that there's an unlimited amount of money that you can spend for politics and so the hell with it. Telephone bills--my God! Call Aunt Sarah, Uncle Joe and everybody they know!

Fry: Good heavens!

Jorgensen: "Good heavens" is right.

Fry: And they expect the local campaign organization treasury to do that?

Jorgensen: Yes, oh yes. Advance men come in--these sharp, dressy--Have you got this thing off?

Fry: No.

Jorgensen: Turn it off.

Fry: Go ahead--this is very colorful.

Jorgensen: Well, you have advance men in the campaign come out. They come into your office and say, "We're the advance men here to arrange for this meeting we're going to have here. We're going to need so many thousands of dollars."

"What for?"

"Well, you know, we've got to take care of things, got to take care of things."

I said, "Fine, go ahead and take care of things."

"But you're supposed to give us money."

"Nope, I'm sorry. No money from me. I'm running a campaign here. You've got a national fund--the national people will pay it." Mr. Stans and I never used to see eye-to-eye on that at all. He thought that was a terrible thing, just an awful thing.

Fry: I'll bet they try to push all the expenses they can off onto the local.

Jorgensen: Sure.

Fry: I surely do thank you. I'll let you eat lunch now. And by the way, here's the tablet that you loaned me last time. Thank you very much. [laughing]

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Roy Day

Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library

University of California
Berkeley, California

Earl Warren Oral History Project

Roy Day

CAMPAIGNING WITH RICHARD NIXON, 1946-1952

An Interview Conducted by
Amelia R. Fry
in 1975

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INTERVIEW HISTORY--Roy Day

Time of Interview: February 21, 1975

Place of Interview: Roy Day's office in the Day Printing Corporation, Fourth and Thomas Streets, Pomona, California

Those Present: Roy Day and the Interviewer

The Interview:

From the first, as we sought advice for a possible subseries on the campaigns of Richard Nixon, we were told to talk to Roy Day. At UCLA, Paul Bullock, who was writing a biography of Nixon's first opponent, Jerry Voorhis, recommended that we interview Day, as he had. Judge Stanley Barnes went so far as to offer to help arrange the interview with Day, which he later did. The other interviewees in this series all asked to make sure that we had also included Roy Day.

Day's natural affability may be one factor that accounts for his incurable state of civic activism, from fundraising for the Campfire Girls to serving on the school board, with many projects in between. As a local Republican with both clout and enthusiasm, he entered Richard Nixon's campaign on the ground floor and loyally repeated his aid in nearly all future campaigns. Meanwhile, his employment with the Pomona Progress Bulletin ceased when he organized his own printing corporation in 1951.

The interview helps to identify contributors, campaign workers and their connections--to each other, to the candidate, and to the particular community or city of each. We learn how the planning was accomplished for Nixon's successful campaigns and how and when the candidate and his staff made decisions. (Day, for example, is certain that Nixon decided to run for the U.S. Senate long before incumbent Democrat Sheridan Downey withdrew, and that Nixon had no problem at all in deciding to stay in the race against Downey's replacement, Helen Gahagan Douglas.) It is obvious that politics is a great game to Roy Day. He enjoyed setting the stage for winning, whether it was a victory for an entire campaign or just one speech of the candidate; "We always had a few persons seated throughout the audience to ask questions which Dick had formulated beforehand," he says, describing routine campaign appearances.

The interview was recorded after an hour or two of going through his papers and discussing an outline prepared beforehand. Files and tape recorder equipment were spread out on a low cocktail table on which there were also cushions to sit. His desk was covered with papers, too, which we had separated into stacks of "Take With You," "Copy," and "Re-file here." He sat in a chair at the side, and sometimes, in referring to papers, walked

around behind his desk to find a particular letter or article. He enjoyed recalling the battles, the plots, the wars; he described, he characterized, he narrated, he chortled, and we both laughed frequently.

Day has other joys in his life, too. His wife worked in the outer office and also had a record in politics, as the head of important Republican women's groups in the area. Day's office walls were hung with photographs of his daughters, unusually good-looking both as children and grown women, and a handsome son. One of the daughters is named Pat, for Pat Nixon. Later in 1978, the Days had dinner with the Nixons while Pat was recuperating from a stroke.

On October 20, 1978, we sent the transcript to him. Research assistant Teresa Allen and I included several questions about identities, ambiguities, and just plain inaudibilities on the tape. Day lost no time in reviewing it, adding corrections, and mailing it back to the office November 22, 1978, with a packet of more papers which he rightfully judged were needed to supplement the interview. As we struggled with chronology and inconsistencies among various interviewees, Day sent more papers--on January 24, 1975, and October and November, 1978. He also contributed his transcript of an interview he had recorded earlier with Professor Paul Bullock.

Some of the papers are reproduced here where the supporting or illustrative quality adds measurably to our discussion. Other letters furnish clues to questions that the project has pursued since its inception, such as the role that Murray Chotiner played in the first Nixon campaign. It is partially answered--or perhaps made even more ambiguous--by a 1945 press release marked "copy for Roy Day," in which the announcement is made of the unanimous recommendation that Lieutenant Nixon be the Republican candidate for Congress. Although the letterhead reads Murray M. Chotiner and Associates, it is scratched out in blue ink with the notation, "Do not use--R. N." Other letters of that first campaign were invaluable in sorting out the sequence of events at a time when the Nixon papers were unavailable in the San Clemente compound. The Nixon Library at Whittier College was being dissolved and any related collection, such as Roy Day was sending to us, had no official archival home. All papers reside in The Bancroft Library, where one letter in particular will surely lighten heavy research days for future historians. Day, responding to the horrifying news of the existence of the now-famous White House tapes, wrote to Rose Mary Woods, April 24, 1974, to either "turn over every damn tape he has knowledge of" or, if too confidential, burn them in a ceremony on the White House lawn. Later the Supreme Court was to wrestle with the collision of the First Amendment versus the Fifth over those tapes, but Roy Day did it first.

Amelia R. Fry
Interviewer-Editor

12 November 1980
Washington, D.C.

I RICHARD NIXON RUNS FOR CONGRESS, 1946

[Interview 1: February 21, 1975]
[begin tape 1; side 1]

The Day Printing Corporation

Fry: I would like mainly to get information that isn't available in your papers.* Can you give me just a quick paragraph on where you were born and where your schooling was?

Day: I was born right here in Pomona, the son of an orange rancher. I grew up on an orange ranch.** I attended Pomona schools and left school my junior year and joined the navy. After two years in the navy, I decided to see a little of the world. I went to Central America and worked two years as secretary of the chief man of the United Fruit Company in Puerto Limón, Costa Rica. Then I came home and went to work selling classified advertising for the Pomona Progress, as it was known then. It's now the Progress-Bulletin--the merger of two papers.

Fry: Then you became head of their advertising department. Is that right?

Day: No. I was selling classified advertising for them. Then later I was selling automobile advertising (I became automobile editor) and selling the grocery market advertising for them. During that period I developed a high-gear run to Mt. Baldy and had people like Ralph Hepburn and some former great racing drivers who came out here and participated. We gave them trophies. It was interesting and good publicity.

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*The Roy Day papers will be deposited in The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

**For a brief autobiographical summary see Appendix C.

Day: Then the newspaper wanted to develop the commercial printing plant when the newsprint became rather scarce during World War II. So they asked me if we could develop some commercial printing accounts. I started out to sell some, and the first thing I knew I was selling more commercial printing than advertising. So the paper decided to put me entirely in commercial printing. Then a conflict developed with the press equipment on who had the priority to get the use of the presses. The newspaper had to have access right away because they had the time element. They had to hit the streets with the newspaper at a certain time. So the paper offered to sell me the commercial printing equipment so that I could form my own company, which I did in 1951.

At first I called it the P.B. Press, using the initials of the Progress-Bulletin because I was too scared at that point to give it another name. I was trying to cling to the "mother" that I'd worked for all this time. But in 1957 I bought my own building, which is next door. It was a former garage and Cadillac-Pontiac agency. I bought the building and have added a lot of equipment. Now we're about the same size as the newspaper. It's called Day Printing Corporation. We do about $1.5 million volume a year now in commercial printing.

Fry: As we were going through your papers, I thought you mentioned to me that you had stopped something in your printing career when you went to work on the Nixon campaign. Is that right? I just thought you mentioned that in passing. I could have heard you wrong.

Day: The publisher of the paper was kind enough to spring me loose to work in the 1950 Nixon campaign. I gave up my vacation so that I could do it and still stay on the payroll of the Progress-Bulletin. I worked without any pay or remuneration whatsoever anytime in the Nixon campaign. The only time any money was given me at all was for traveling expense, and that was in the Senate campaign when I had to travel up to the northern part of California.

Fry: You had to foot the bill for your own travel for all those other things?

Day: Oh, yes.

Day's Early Campaign Experience

Fry: Also, before 1946 when Nixon first ran, you handled or did some work in other campaigns. In 1944, didn't you work in Ernest Geddes's campaign as his manager? Or was there something before that even?

Day: Yes. I had observed some ill-fated campaigns that Republicans had conducted. I felt that they did not approach a campaign in the proper method. They seemed to have two or three bigwigs meet in a locked-up room someplace and pick a candidate. I felt that was the reason they weren't getting the right candidates and that people weren't buying them.

So in 1944, the situation developed where our assemblyman, Lee Bayshore of Glendora, who happened to be a very good one, died of a heart attack in a St. Louis hotel after his name was already on the ballot and could not even be removed. Some people talked to me about running for the Assembly. I said I wasn't interested but I was certainly interested in trying to see if we could get a candidate.

It so happened that Ernest Geddes had ridden in to Los Angeles with me to attend a Tom Dewey rally. He made a statement on the way back. He said, "I think anybody should give some time to politics." Geddes was just that concerned with government. He was a past master of a Masonic lodge, and I happened to belong to the Masonic fraternity. So, looking for a candidate, I went over and talked to Ernest Geddes. He was just getting ready to leave the position he had as an advertising manager for a local laundry system, so I talked him into running. I took his campaign. That was my first one. It was very interesting. We had bumper strips with his name on them and we parked cars near the polling places. It was completely a write-in campaign because we couldn't get his name on the ballot. Lee Bayshore's name was on the ballot as the Republican candidate. We were so successful that Mr. Geddes was elected. The man who had passed away ran second, and the Democrat candidate ran third. So we were quite proud of our activities in that campaign.

Then in 1944 I also took a look at the congressional campaign. We had a candidate, Tom Ball, who I felt just wasn't qualified for the office. I felt that we couldn't elect him. I met with the Twelfth Congressional District Central Committee. I accepted a position as chairman of the county central committee for the old Twelfth Congressional District. (Now Pomona is a part of the Twenty-fifth District. It's been changed.) I went to a meeting in a schoolroom at El Monte High School where the central committee picked the candidate.

The conversation and the way they picked the candidate was rather discouraging to me. They didn't really go into the merits of the situation. They came up with a candidate who was a very fine person. He knew the oil business, but he didn't know anything about the problems of the people of the Twelfth District. In his first speech, which he made to the blue-ribbon section of our district over in the San Marino-South Pasadena area, he talked about labor unions and the working man. He did everything he could to discourage anybody that had over 15¢

Day: in the bank. Consequently he went down the drain. He couldn't make a good speech. He couldn't even explain why he was running in any forceful manner. So I made up my mind right then that something had to be done. I decided right after that 1944 election was over--and I forgot it very rapidly--that I was going to try to develop some kind of a plan.

The Fact Finding Committee Begins

Day: That's when I conceived the idea of a candidate and fact finding committee comprised of citizens all over the district.* I went to each town and found out how many registered voters they had on each Republican ticket. I prorated that among a hundred so I'd have a total committee of a hundred. Then I asked who the people were in each community who had prestige and a reputation. I said, "I don't necessarily want the presidents of the bank or the building and loan or all the big shots up and down the main street. That's been the trouble with our party. What I want is people that have a following. They can be a past president of women's club. They can be somebody that's been active in the Scout movement. I preferably want somebody that has children, preferably somebody that even loves pets. This is the kind of a person I'm looking for as a congressional candidate."

Preferably I wanted someone that had a service record, because Jerry Voorhis, who'd been in for ten years and is highly intelligent and a good congressman from his side of the fence, the Democrat side, was really going to be difficult to beat. He was no pushover. But the fact was that Voorhis was not a veteran. He hadn't been in the service. I thought that was a weak point that we could attack. I believe in attacking and not being on the defensive in a campaign. I've always operated that way, and it's been very successful.

So, the fact finding committee had a series of meetings. We heard about this man Richard Nixon through the retired manager of the Bank of America over in Whittier, a grand person by the name of Herman Perry who is now passed on. He told me about Richard Nixon. Perry said Nixon was president of his student body at Whittier High School--Whittier College, that he received a scholarship to Duke University School of Law, and that he was an outstanding person. At that time

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*For a partial listing of members of the fact finding committee (the Committee of One Hundred) see Appendix A. For an explanation of the committee's purpose as conceived by Roy Day and a discussion of potential candidates see Appendix B, Roy Day to Walter Dexter, October 13, 1945.

Day: Nixon was in the navy, and he was doing re-negotiation of navy contracts back at Baltimore. So the next thing was to get him out here so the committee could get a look at him and listen to him. I asked Perry to get him out here for me to see.

Fry: [pause to check tape recorder] There is a letter that Perry wrote to Lance D. Smith [pause] recommending Nixon, and you sent it to him.

Day: Yes, Perry called me and then I reviewed a copy of the letter.* So we managed, through the cooperation of Boyd Gibbons, who knew the president of American Arlines, and Roy Crocker and a few others to fly Mr. Nixon and his wife out here. I met them for the first time at a small informal dinner over in Whittier. He made a few remarks there. Pat Nixon had gone to the luncheon over in San Marino.

There's a very interesting sidelight on Pat. The reaction from one rather die-hard, so-called Republican woman leader in San Marino who soon faded out of the picture was, "Why, this girl doesn't even know what color nail polish to wear!" Later I made this same remark in Australia. That was the heading in the newspaper that they used that Nixon's wife didn't know the right nail polish. But the newspaper went on to say some very nice things that they picked up that I did say about Pat.

Fry: And how many people were at this dinner?

Day: About eighty would be my guess.

Fry: Did you get to talk to him personally?

Day: Oh yes, I talked to him personally. I heard him talk, and I went up and talked to him afterwards. He made a statement that he felt he'd like to be of service to the community, that he felt that he owed this to his country and to the community, that if he had something to offer he wanted to give it, and that he was interested. I made the statement, "This man is salable merchandise," when I heard him talk. That's just the very words I used.

---

*See page 6.

Whittier Branch

Whittier, California
October 3, 1945

Mr. Lance D. Smith
111 West Main Street
Puente, California

Dear Lance:

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of October 1, 1945, in regard to the Fact Finding Committee and the meeting to be held at Monrovia on October 5. However, due to a previous engagement, it will not be possible for me to attend this meeting.

I would like to advise that some of the people in the Whittier area are interested in suggesting the name of Lt. Richard Nixon, USNR, (attorney at law--former law partner of Thomas W. Bewley, City Attorney for the city of Whittier.) He served his country as an attorney for the OPA at the request of Duke University. He resigned his position when war was declared and obtained a commission in the Navy. He served the Navy first in Washington, D. C. and then in the South Pacific. For the past six or eight months he has been in charge of a department in re-negotiation for the Navy. He has had over three years of war service.

Lt. Nixon comes from good Quaker stock and is about thirty-five years of age. He is a graduate of Whittier College and a member of the Board. By hard work he obtained a scholarship to Duke University law school. He is a very aggressive individual. He was an orator and debater in high school and college.

Yours very truly,

H. L. Perry

HLP:G

Richard Nixon as Campaigner

Day: So, then the next thing was to get Nixon out here. He was still in navy uniform, but he got his discharge soon after that [January, 1946] so we could get him out here. The next thing was to set up meetings. We had our kick-off for the primary campaign on Lincoln's birthday, 1946, at the old Ebell Club House in Pomona.* It was packed to the brim.

Fry: What club house?

Day: Ebell. It's a ladies' club. [spells it] It was packed to the rafters because everybody wanted to hear him because we'd picked him at a meeting of the candidates and of the fact finding committee. Nixon got all but eight votes on the first ballot, and that was made unanimous [November 28, 1946]. Then he made a terrific impression on the people at this kick-off banquet. We felt we had something we could really take out and sell to the people. We didn't have to apologize for our product in any way, shape, or form.

The next thing was to get him some civilian clothes. He has terrifically large feet and we had trouble getting a pair of shoes that was big enough for him [laughter], but we finally found a pair here in Pomona. We got him a nice suit of clothes in a local clothing store. Johnny Evans went down in the basement and drug up a suit that he hadn't even put out to show yet--Johnny Evans's store. He's very proud of the fact that he could furnish the first suit of civilian clothes for us. So we got the candidate fixed up for the campaign.

Fry: I read somewhere also--I think it was a comment of yours in later years--that not only did Pat Nixon wear the wrong color nail polish, but Dick Nixon liked awfully loud ties.

Day: Yes. In the campaign, some of the incidents in the campaign--and I've said this in talks I've made about him--I criticized him for certain things which are interesting in view of where he went from there on. The first point I noticed about him was that he wouldn't look women in the eyes, in the face. He'd turn his head; he was shy. He was anything but a coward because later events certainly proved it--his travels in Russia when he put Krushchev in a corner and when he put some people in a corner that treated Pat and himself badly in South America. But he was just shy and he'd turn his head.

---

*See p. 8.

JOHN S. BARCOME
CHAIRMAN

DONN TATUM
SECRETARY

Memorandum to: Roy O. Day

Sorting my own here a little more copy Roy

February 13, 1946

Dear Roy:

You will be interested in knowing that -- as I expected -- the reports which are flying about town this morning on your last night's meeting are nothing but good. The meeting was really magnificant, Roy, and you are to be congratulated for producing the largest single district meeting which I personally have seen in some fifteen years. I only wish that your brother congressional district chairmen could have been present to see what intelligent organization can do.

Best regards,

John S. Barcome, Chairman
Republican Central Committee

JSB:md

THE REPUBLICAN CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

43

---

copy of a ticket mailed to Stanley N. Barnes by Rockwood C. Nelson --from the files of Judge Stanley N. Barnes

"I'll Be There"

LINCOLN BIRT. DAY DINNER

Sponsored by Republicans of
Twelfth Congressional District

EBELL CLUBHOUSE — POMONA
585 E. Holt Avenue

Tuesday Evening, February 12th :: 7:00 p. m.
$2.00 PER PLATE

PRESENTING LT. COMDR. RICHARD M. NIXON, USNR

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Day: Then he wore real loud ties. I made the comment to him, "Dick, these women are going to remember the tie you wore, and they won't know a word you said." And I also said, "You have to look these people in the face or they won't think you're telling the truth." These are some of the ridiculous criticisms I made, which were very factual at the time, but now they seem funny to me when I look back and see what's happened to this man and how he developed from that point on. But Dick had some sterling qualities.

We set up the coffee hours. Both his wife and himself met with different groups. I planned these hours so that Pat and Dick didn't dress up. These weren't dressy affairs. They'd just go in their house clothes during the day. It was mainly women during the day and then husbands and wives in the evening. Pat would go to some meetings during the day and meet with the women.

Pat by the way, in my estimation, is one of the finest women that ever lived. Anybody that throws any bricks at her, I'd personally take them on. She's a lovely person and so are the children.

But Dick would sit down and ask people what kind of government they wanted, what do they expect from the government. Now a mistake had been made by a previous candidate that I'd worked some with. He was telling everybody what he was going to do for them. This didn't go over because they felt they were being dictated to; they didn't buy it. Nixon's strongest point was that he would ask people what they would like to have from their government and then he'd reason with them.

I remember having about forty girls from Scripps College for Women [Claremont, Ca.], down to my home one evening. They sat around on the floor and talked to Dick Nixon. I did this purposely because Jerry Voorhis had been on the staff at Scripps as sort of an extra professor, and he had them pretty well spellbound. So these girls came down loaded for bear for Dick Nixon. He wrapped them up beautifully before the evening was over just by his attitude and the way he handled them. He would ask them what they wanted, and he'd let them speak their piece. And rather than make a direct contradiction he would lead them around to right field, center field, and second base, into the pitcher's box, until he had them over in his corner. He has terrific ability in that regard. He was a champion debater both at Whittier and Duke. He knows the value of being on the affirmative and not getting on the defensive. He was very successful in that regard.

The Candidates Debate

Day: I had a letter that Jerry Voorhis had written, the same letter he'd written to two previous Republican candidates. Voorhis said, "I hope we will be able to meet on the platform and discuss the issues for the people of the Twelfth District." He had two sitting ducks in the two campaigns before that, and that's about all he had to do to win, because he just made them look silly on the platform. But when he took on Dick Nixon he had the wrong one.

We kept that letter. So when the right time came I sent the answer that Mr. Nixon would like to accept Voorhis's offer to meet on the platform. We would like to meet him in certain cities--we named them--at any time convenient to Mr. Voorhis. We said this so Voorhis couldn't back out of the debates, and so that he couldn't duck it and say that he was busy. I'm sure after the first debate he'd liked to have ducked them.

Then we had questions planted in the audience, of course, to ask him. In the meantime I'd done some research on Mr. Voorhis's record. I found out one very interesting fact, that in the ten years that Mr. Voorhis was in Congress not one bill introduced by him was ever enacted into law. So we saved that for a rather rough meeting we were going to have over in San Gabriel where the mission is. The crowd there was more Democrat than some of the other areas of our district at that time, so we saved the Sunday punch for there. I asked a question in the question period. I said, "Congressman Voorhis, what bill introduced by you in the entire ten years that you have been in the Congress of the United States has ever been enacted into law?" Jerry Voorhis had been running all over the district telling about all the legislation he had introduced, and the people didn't detect that introducing it and getting it through into law were two entirely different things. This was where we had him.

Fry: That took a piece of research on your part because I know how hard it is to find out about bills.

Day: Well, yes. So, Voorhis got up to the microphone with the same old line and thought he'd get by with it. Nixon walked up slowly. He had a copy of the Congressional Record in his hand. He said, "While Mr. Voorhis has been in Washington I've been in the service of my country in the South Pacific," which in itself was a dig because Voorhis was of military age, "and according to this Congressional Record, which I assume is supposed to be fairly accurate," (this is throughout the way he said it) "not one bill introduced by Congressman Voorhis in the entire ten years that he's been in the Congress of the United States has been enacted into law. There was only one resolution introduced by Congressman Voorhis, transferring authority over domestic

Day: rabbits from the Department of Agriculture to the Department of the Interior. Therefore, I assume you have to be a rabbit to have representation in the Twelfth Congressional District." He brought the house down. Voorhis slumped in his chair; he was whipped. From then on we had him on the run. That was the ball game right there, on that first election.

Fry: What I need from you in this election is a picture of the way you worked with Nixon, how you presented your ideas to him and how he responded.

Day: All right, yes. Mrs. Nixon had been a school teacher. I'm sure you know all that history. When Dick came back to California from the service they rented a house that some barber had owned over in Whittier, a very modest bungalow. I would go over there. He had ample foolscap paper and we'd sit down and he would write out notes. He said he was going to say this, and he'd say that. Then he would analyze and write what he thought Voorhis would say in reply to him. This was, I felt, where the man was very smart. I've used these same tactics in other campaigns. His tactic and mine was: I'm going to say something to reason out what the opposition's answer is to it. Is the answer going to flatten the question? I gave you a prime example a few minutes ago. [laughter] Of course, that was a very unusual situation. But this was what he would do. He'd scratch that out and he'd say, "Well, that's no good." He would try to emphasize just a few important points, rather than try to cover the waterfront.

Fry: That sounds like your advice. Was it?

Day: It is. Many politicians, in my experience, try to have an answer for everything that happens, and people end up not knowing where they stand on anything. People get confused. A candidate should pick something that will appeal to a majority of the people and which will not, at the same time, lose 40 percent of the voters that may be opposed to this very thing. That's the tough part of a candidate. He has to pick some issue that a majority of the people will support and not, at the same time, alienate almost half of them.

Fry: Did you have trouble finding your issue in this campaign?

Day: No, we didn't. We talked about the ranchers and farming and diversified industries here and water.

Comments on Murray Chotiner

Fry: I get two different stories on whether or not Murray Chotiner did anything for Nixon in the 1946 campaign.

Day: I engaged Murray Chotiner in 1946 to write publicity midway in the campaign because well-meaning people, town chairmen throughout the Twelfth Congressional District, were writing their own versions of what Nixon stood for, and it was causing us some trouble.* So, I felt the only way to cure it was to get an experienced writer.

[end tape 1, side 1; begin tape 1, side 2]

Day: I heard about Murray Chotiner through some friends of mine in Los Angeles, that he was a very able writer and had a keen knowledge of politics. I was able to get him to write our releases. It enabled me to tell our town chairmen that I did not want them writing their own news releases. We wanted releases to come from one source and say what we wanted to say and at the time we wanted to say it.

We wanted to save our Sunday punches until just before the election, which is very important in a campaign. A lack of timing is what cost Tom Dewey the presidency in '48. He didn't have anything to talk about the last two weeks, and little Harry Truman, the necktie salesman, cut him to ribbons and Dewey couldn't defend himself. That's another story.

But Murray would get these releases out. I paid him $1,000, I think it was, to write some releases for us. He sent his Ruth Arnold out to cover meetings. So that's where Murray got into the act.

Fry: Well, it was Earl Adams who thought--

Day: Earl Adams. Maybe he's the one that knew Chotiner. I don't remember where I got the name.

Fry: Adams didn't think that Murray Chotiner had had anything to do with the campaign, because Adams had only seen Chotiner at one speech of Nixon's, making some notes.

Day: Chotiner didn't and he wasn't. He sent Ruth Arnold to cover it. I think that was her name, Ruth Arnold.

Fry: Ruth Arnold?

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*See p. 13

Pomona, California,
December 9, 1945

Mr. Murray M. Chotiner,
500 Fox Wilshire Theatre Bldg.,
202 South Hamilton Drive,
Beverly Hills, California.

Dear Murray,

I am enclosing copy of letter of acceptance from Lt. Commander Richard M. Nixon, as the candidate selected by our 12th District C&FF Committee, which I believe should be incorporated in a news release to all papers in the district, as well as the metropolitan press.

I believe it very important to keep something coming along from time to time, to maintain interest until Nixon is out here and can carry the ball on his own behalf.

Incidentally I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your fine work in covering our meetings and getting releases out to the press. We plan to arrange a dinner for the press as soon as Nixon is here, followed by several large meetings spotted throughou the 12th District. I know the 53d district plans one, and I have a hunch we can arrange a whale of a good Lincoln Day dinner here in Pomona, for a capacity gathering of 400-450 in the Pomona Ebell Club if it meets with general approval of the district. Committees are being set up throughout the district to get Nixon under way when he returns.

Thanks for your cooperation Murray.

Sincerely,

Roy Day
Chairman

D

Day: Yes. There was a Dorothy Arnold who was a pest in our camp, bothering us all the time. She was against us. Ruth Arnold, I think, worked with Chotiner.

Fry: She was kind of Chotiner's "leg man"?

Day: Yes. She's the one that got the stories.

Fry: Oh, so that's why Adams didn't remember Chotiner.

Day: Anyway, I batted back and forth to Los Angeles with Murray. Murray never ran around with us in the campaign at all. So, Earl is right on that.

I learned a lot about politics from Murray. I don't completely respect a lot of the ways he operated. But Murray is the one that taught me, if I was making a speech or trying to sell a candidate, to pick out somebody about six or eight rows out and keep my eye on them quite a bit of the time to see how they were reacting to my talk. If Nixon was speaking, I would watch this person the same way and see when he was losing interest and at what point he picked up interest. Then I would tell Dick to pick that part out of his speech and put that in near the end. We want the audience to walk out blazing for Dick Nixon. A lot of speakers will build up their case and then look at their watch and say, "Oh, I have to talk fifteen minutes longer, but I haven't anything to say, so I'll just rattle." This is part of the ball game, particularly in politics or with any public speaker.

I had that criticism of Senator [William] Knowland--a very fine man. Senator Knowland would speak looking up at the sky. He never would pick up his audience. He'd never look down at somebody or pick out somebody. I think this is a very important thing in trying to reach people; you reach somebody out there and then hope you have your whole audience.

Fry: Did Chotiner help Nixon with his speeches in '46?

Day: No.

Fry: Was that you who helped him?

Day: I worked with him more than anybody else. Nixon knew about what he wanted to say anyway. He didn't need much help with his speeches. I don't claim any glory for that. We'd throw in some ideas, some things I'd heard here and there, and I'd tell him. No, Nixon has a brain. He knows what he's doing.

Fry: With campaign handouts, I guess you must have had the same problem you had with some of the newspaper stories, the problem of controling what local communities might print up. Did you do all the printing of literature during the primary?

Day: I did the printing of our actual literature that we sent out, but town chairmen were always putting some statement in the paper or something on their own. Some things just weren't what we wanted to do or didn't even represent Nixon. These chairmen thought they were doing him a favor, but they hadn't had experience in campaigns. We had people that hadn't run campaigns.

Fry: I should get an example from you, so researchers can be alerted when they are reading newspapers and there's something there that really wasn't what Nixon would've said.

Day: The first thing in the story is to tell your whole story in the first two paragraphs or else don't write it.

Fry: Just poor journalism then?

Day: That was a lot of it, yes, but these chairmen would go off on some tangent. You'd say, "Well, who cares about this?" They'd go off on something that might have been important to fifteen people in some town but didn't even represent the area or was not important to the area. People wanted to know where he stood on the important things.

Nature of the Fact Finding Committee

Fry: On this handwirtten letter here that Nixon wrote on foolscap he's asking you to write a nice, "breezy" pep letter thanking people for all the work that everybody had done to put him over in the primary. Down here he says, "I'd be darned sure copies went to Biddick--"

Day: Yes, Walter Biddick.

Fry: Can you read this? A couple of others are also mentioned--Boardman and Arnold.

Day: Yes, Walter Boardman, I think it was. Larimer, Boardman, and William Arnold. They're the ones that were bucking him for the primaries. [quoting from the Nixon foolscap] Which "will spike the sniping which went on before the primaries and I feel you deserve a helluva lot of credit..."[laughing] This is a funny letter. It's lousy penmanship. It's about as bad as I write, isn't it?

Fry: Well, you can read it anyway. I wondered who those four people were.

Day: They were a bunch of--they were over around the Alhambra area. They were bitching about--well, they didn't quite warm up to somebody moving in and taking the whole ball game and running with it. They didn't mind my idea to start with, but they--we ignored them and failure to recognize them destroyed their opposition in a hurry.

Fry: Did they have their own candidate?

Day: No, they didn't have anybody definitely in mind.

Fry: Could you characterize the type of Republicans who got behind Nixon in this committee? Was it a young and upcoming group who felt that some reforms needed to be made, or was it an established group that was reliable?

Day: No, it was an established, reliable group. It wasn't a Bolshevik, young group at all. There were substantial business people in their communities, and women of stature. No, it wasn't like the Governor Jerry Brown group we have now, not that type at all, no.

Fry: What about the California Republican Assembly? Did it play any role in the fact finding committee per se?

Day: No, they didn't. I don't think they even--no, they weren't effective at that point.

Fry: What was Herb Klein's role in '46? I noticed in that newspaper article he was mentioned as working also on publicity.*

Day: Herb Klein was with a San Diego paper. We got him to be Nixon's public relations man, press man, in the final campaign. Herb Klein is a very high caliber person. You notice he got out of this mess of Watergate back there in Washington.

Fry: Yes.

Day: You notice Bob Finch got out of it. Klein and Finch knew something; don't think they didn't. I've talked to both of them, but I never tried to even ask them that question. But I know darn well they knew things were going haywire, and they just got out.

Fry: They got out in time.

Day: Oh, yes. Herb Klein's a very fine person. I like him very much.

Fry: Did he work with Murray Chotiner in sending in the press releases? Or do I have the picture right?

Day: I don't think Herb Klein was mixed up with Chotiner. No, Herb Klein wasn't in the '46 campaign. I think you got your timing wrong on that.

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*Alhambra Post-Advocate, November 13, 1968, p. 6a.

Fry: It's mentioned in that newspaper article, and it could be wrong, you know the one that came out on the day Nixon was elected president.

Day: Herb Klein wasn't in the 1946 primary at all. I know, because he was working with the San Diego paper. No, the Alhambra Post-Advocate got him later.

Fry: I want to add right here that the letter from Perry to Lance Smith, suggesting Richard Nixon, is dated October 3, 1945. I just want to get that date in the transcript.

Day: Yes, '45. That's right. That's where I heard about Richard Nixon. Perry called me about Nixon and then I reviewed a copy of the letter.

Fry: Where did Perry get the idea to write Smith? Do you think Perry read the newspaper articles about the committee?

Day: I'd gone to all these towns, setting up this fact finding committee. I had meetings in different places with different key people. They came and I told them what I wanted to do. I ran a story in the papers telling what I was going to do.

Fry: Yes, we've got a copy of one of those stories.* There were about seven candidates who were not selected. It would be interesting to talk about them.

Day: Yes, Judge Harry Hunt of San Gabriel was one of them. Sam Gist, a Pomona furniture dealer, was one, and Ernest Geddes threw his name in just to make my show go, with no idea of taking it.

Fry: Just to be sure there was enough competition?

Day: Yes, that's right. He had no idea of taking it. He was working with me hand and glove. Oh, gosh! We had--oh, thunder! I wonder where the write-up is on that stuff. We had a guy that appeared before our committee and made the best Republican talk probably of any of them. But I found out he'd been registered as "declined-to-state" and was a registered Socialist before that. I have said this in my talks. I don't know how I ever had sense enough to check his background, but I did. I picked it up. Being a dope, just starting on this stuff, I don't know why I didn't just accept what he said. He made a beautiful talk, but we sure crucified him in a hurry! I said, "We happen to have your record, Buddy. Just walk away."

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*See p. 18.

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Progress-Bulletin [Pomona, Calif.]
Calif., Wednesday Evening, October 31, 1945 Page 5, Sec. 2

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"We were only defeated by a small percentage last year, after dividing our strength in the primary election and then being forced to marshal our forces for the final campaign. This time we do not intend to commit that error.

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"We are determined to recommend a Republican candidate to the voters who will truly represent our district in Washington."

Day: You know they're going to pick up your record in the campaign anyway. But I can't remember his name, darn it, or a couple of others. When it came down to it there were only about three or four candidates left in the thing. Some were mentioned, but they didn't run. Dr. A. Kenneth Spencer, we talked to him a little bit but never got serious. I think it was Dr. Spencer, a dentist in Alhambra. Bob French was one of our leaders, too, in Alhambra, but I don't think he was going to run. He was one of our key people. But all these people are dead now. I don't know what's keeping me going, but a lot of them are kicked out.

Fry: Well I don't know, but I'm glad you're here.

Day: I spoke over at Alhambra at the Lincoln Day dinner that they had; the Republican County Central Committee wanted me to speak a couple of years, three years ago, or whatever it was. I don't know whether you got that write-up or not. I think it was in that stuff somewhere.

Fry: Yes.

Day: Land! I checked the list, and we only had about fifty left of our committee of One Hundred. The Committee of One Hundred finally ended up with a hundred and twenty-one, because Los Angeles County leaders made me put the members of the county central committee on, through the three assembly districts. You see, I wasn't even going to use the committee members. I wanted to make it completely a citizens' committee, but they bitched so much about it that I finally included the members of the county committee. See, there are seven members of the county central committee in each assembly district, so they made me include them on the thing. But it didn't change it any; it worked out all right.

Fry: Including the members from the central committee would have interfered with the plans to make the campaign as bipartisan as possible, which was necessary in those days of cross-filing.

Day: I know. But the technique of a fact finding committee worked. That was the last time this method has been used in our district, so now we have a Democrat in part of the new area.

Fry: What Democrats did you have really working?

Day: Oh, I didn't have any. No, it really wasn't a bipartisan effort particularly. I don't think it says that anyplace.

Fry: The bipartisan effort was more in his senatorial campaign in 1950.

Day: Yes, we tried to separate the sound Democrats from this flaming liberal, as we painted [Helen Gahagan] Douglas.

II RICHARD NIXON IN CAMPAIGNS, 1948 TO 1952

Republican National Conventions: 1948 and 1952

Fry: You told me off tape that when you went to the Republican convention in 1948, where Dewey and Earl Warren were nominated, you went as a delegate and that you were Richard Nixon's roommate there.

Day: Yes, we roomed together.

Fry: How did that happen? Just tell me the story.

Day: I talked to him about it; it was just a mutual agreement. He wanted to have a room with me. He came as a congressman and I was a delegate, and we just decided to room together. He seemed to want to. I don't know actually who made the approach, whether he did or whether I did.

Fry: How did you get on the delegation? How was it selected?

Day: Recommendations. You saw some of those letters.

Fry: I've got a letter here of recommendation, but, you know, they probably had hundreds of those for various other people.

Day: I'd say McIntyre Faries was a real wheel on this thing.

Fry: Did you know Mac Faries? He was national committeeman and chairman of the Executive Committee of the Republican National Committee.

Day: Oh, very well. Yes, both him and his wife. And I knew the governor [Earl Warren]; I had met him. He knew who I was. He knew what I'd done with the fact finding committee. So, Dick made it pretty plain he wanted me on the delegation.

Did you get the letter I threw out there where Nixon recommended me?

Fry: Was that letter a recommendation to this 1948 convention? I was reading so fast.

Day: Yes. In '52 I was just a guest. I didn't even try to be a delegate to that. I wasn't even going and somebody wanted me to go. Somebody from Pomona thought I ought to go, that I could do some good for the ticket they wanted. That's why I went in '52--through my stooging.

Fry: Yes, because '52 was entirely different.

Day: Oh, yes.

Fry: Warren was a serious candidate in '52. In '48 he was just a nominal head, as I understand it. Was that your understanding?

Day: That's right.

Fry: Was it essentially a free delegation in '48, but with a unit rule?

Day: No, it's a unit rule. That's it, see. Delegates go tied to the governor till he releases them.

Fry: This is important in relation to what happened in '52, because some of the Earl Warren supporters in the '52 delegation got very upset when there was a move for Eisenhower before Warren had released the California delegation.

Day: I know it.

Fry: So the question is, when you signed that pledge to support the head of your delegation in 1948, was it the same pledge of allegiance they all signed in 1952?

Day: I don't know that we signed anything. We were pledged to Tom Dewey. I don't think I signed anything. We just had conferences.

Fry: But you were pledged anyway; that's the difference.

Day: Actually it's no better than your word; let's put it that way. If you signed in blood I don't think it'd make any difference. If you wanted to change it, you'd change it. Some delegates do break over, at least sometimes. But in '48 there was no problem. That's the reason I didn't go to the darned floor. Somebody called for a roll call, and here I was down in some place having dinner and talking to a bunch of people [laughter]. I heard it on radio or something and had a fit, but I couldn't get back.

Fry: You mean when they had the roll call for--

Day: Yes, I wasn't there.

Fry: Why weren't you there?

Day: I decided there wouldn't be any roll call to it. It was going to be automatic [to nominate Dewey] for the ballot, so I didn't see any reason to be there. I was running around Philadelphia someplace.

Fry: What can you tell us about Richard Nixon and the '48 convention, because he's practically invisible there.

Day: He didn't do anything in the '48 convention frankly. He really didn't. He didn't have any prominence there, or anything.

Fry: He didn't have any official capacity?

Day: His whole reputation at that point was on the Alger Hiss thing. He had cracked that with the congressional committee.

Fry: Did he express any opinion on the selection of the vice-president to you? I wonder how he felt about Warren at that point.

Day: I can't remember. Frankly I think he just kind of went along with the thing. I can't remember him really taking a stand or talking much about it. I think he just kind of went along with--

Fry: He didn't have a personal opinion?

Day: I don't remember. I know if he had a forceful or strong opinion that was different I'd remember it. I don't remember him taking any position against what the ball team was doing. It just seemed to be slated.

Fry: I guess it must be an advantage to go to a convention, since all the other members of your party are gathered from all over the United States.

Day: Oh, yes.

Fry: I suppose if you go as a congressman and not a delegate, you are there really to meet and talk with these other people and make good medicine with them for your future.

Day: Oh, yes. It's darned good public relations, sure. It's probably not the place to start a rumpus anyway, unless you really have something you really want to sell yourself, and he wasn't in any position then to be doing anything like that.

Fry: One of the things we ask everybody is about the relationship between Richard Nixon and Earl Warren, because neither man has really said very much about that. Yet there are endless inches of copy written about the relationship, based on almost nothing.

Day: I don't think they have much to go on. I don't think you can write much about it, because I don't recall if he's ever ripped into Earl Warren or said a great deal about him one way or another.

Fry: Nixon certainly didn't publicly, except once.

Day: No. I don't think privately he did either.

Fry: I think we're ready to go into the 1950 campaign.

[end tape 1, side 2; begin tape 2, side 1]

Nixon Runs for U.S. Senate, 1950

[The following insert is taken from tape 1, side 1]

Day: Then particularly I traveled with Dick in the 1950 Senate campaign--if I can switch to that, and this Helen Gahagan Douglas that we tangled with in that campaign. While we were flying up and down the state Dick Nixon would do research on the community where he was going to speak and find out some issue or something of particular interest to that community so that he could talk about something of strictly local interest. This is something else a lot of candidates don't do. They give their canned speech. They just cover the whole waterfront. But Nixon always had something that he'd dug up about the various towns and communities we were going into. He'd get information from their local chairman, or I'd get it. Anyway, we had it. He would always pick up his audience by referring to that and then go into his basic policy statewide and fit that policy into the national picture.

Helen Gahagan Douglas--an interesting sidelight in that campaign--her organization had a girl working in our headquarters in Los Angeles.

Fry: You mean hired by Helen Gahagan Douglas?

Day: Hired by Douglas's group. I don't say that she did it; it was her campaign organization. Douglas had a girl on our payroll that was briefing her on what our travel schedule was. First thing you knew Douglas was following us, just running along about--sometimes a few hours and sometimes a day behind us, so we found out that it had to be that kind of a situation. We decided we would do something about it. We had an invitation to appear in Beverly Hills High School auditorium jointly with her.

Fry: You mean Nixon and Helen Gahagan Douglas were appearing together?

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"We are determined to recommend a Republican candidate to the voters who will truly represent our district in Washington."

Day: Yes, both of them speaking, two sides of the fence. We knew that she wouldn't accept if Nixon was going to appear because she had ducked a few situations like it.

Fry: She did appear with Nixon at the Commonwealth Club once--

Day: He nailed her at the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco, yes.

Fry: The newspapers picked that up.

Day: Yes. I wasn't in San Francisco at that point. I didn't go there.

But anyway, this other incident--I was very much in it. I helped put it together with Murray Chotiner. What happened was we told this girl from the Douglas campaign we didn't see how we could get to the joint meeting because we had to be in Arlington for a meeting, which was true. But we got out of the Arlington meeting as fast as we could into my car and phoned up and rented a room at the Beverly Hills Hotel in my name. We drove up and parked the car out in front and had the man keep it there. Murray Chotiner was over casing Douglas's talk because she went on ahead of us. She didn't know we were even going to appear.

A couple of days before that--and I don't want to leave this out--the garment workers had put out a real smear sheet on Nixon. (We got ahold of most of the sheets and threw them out in the Pacific Ocean, but some of them got out.) So, Nixon had one of them.

We went up to this room. We had paid in advance for the room. I thought afterwards I wonder what they thought of the two of us going up to this room since we were only going to be there for an hour [laughter]. It looked a little suspicious. To register, Nixon stood over by the magazine rack because he was trying not to be identified. I went over and paid for the room.

Then Murray Chotiner phoned us the minute Douglas was through speaking. Nixon was pacing the floor in the room. He said, "We ought to get the word. We ought to get the word, Roy. It's time." We got the call and we tore down, got in my car, and drove over to the auditorium to the high school. Murray met us outside and he hurriedly briefed Nixon as we were walking in about what she had said.

So Nixon goes strutting down the aisle with his briefcase and his garment workers' smear sheet on the outside of it where Douglas could see it. He walks up, walks backstage, shakes hands with the gal that was the chairman of the meeting. It was really funny to see Helen Gahagan Douglas, an experienced actress and a very fine actress. Her shoulders just absolutely slumped. She answered one question and ducked out of there. She said she had to get to another meeting. She just absolutely tore out of there. That is where Nixon tore her to shreds. He really let her have it.

Fry: Was this in response to the garment workers' sheet?

Day: Yes, he attacked that and her whole campaign. He just ripped her whole campaign to shreds and told what she'd been doing, some of the things that was going on. He was talking to largely a Jewish audience, and the Jews have never been particularly fond of Nixon, at least up to that time. In fact, I don't think they ever have been too fond of him. But he really went over because he had everything on his side. It was very interesting. That was one of the most interesting incidents that I've ever been involved in in politics; it was really a lot of fun.

Fry: You were able to pull it off because you could rent that motel room?

Day: Oh yes, it was a hotel room, Beverly Hills Hotel. Oh yes, right in the top hotel.

Fry: [laughter] For one hour.

[end insert from tape 1, side 1; begin tape 2, side 1]

Fry: What was your position in the 1950 campaign? Did you have an exact title that we should know about?

Day: No. That's when Bernie Brennan called me and wanted me to join them and travel, just on the basis of my political savvy. That's where I joined Dick in Fresno and traveled with him in the Helen Gahagan Douglas campaign.

Fry: What we haven't recorded is about your being called for the campaign. You told me off the record. You mentioned it, but it wasn't put in the time context.

Day: Bernie Brennan called me, asked me if I could possibly get away, and said that Nixon needed help. He needed somebody to travel with him that could break him loose from crowds and keep him on his schedule and help him. And so I went. I was working for the newspaper then; I wasn't my own boss. That was two years before I bought the commercial printing business. So I went to them and they said, "Well, you haven't had any vacation. You want to do it?"

I said, "Yes, I'd like to." So I traveled with Nixon, oh, I guess about the last three weeks. I flew to Fresno, as I recall, and I went to the California Hotel and checked in a room there, and then went over to the Fresno Hotel where Dick was. He told me what the problem was, that he couldn't get loose. Bernie Brennan had rather well briefed me on what the problem was. So, I told him what I was going to do, what I was supposed to do, and it worked out real well. I'd case the crowd and I'd try to check and see if we'd got the right people in the front rows, so there wouldn't be hecklers up there to upset him or get on the radio or the loudspeakers. I'd find some excuse to get him to move on to the next speaker.



Kickoff for Senate race.
Pomona, California 1950



Pat and Richard Nixon
1950



At a 1950 campaign dinner.

Left to right: Roy Day, Congressman Richard Nixon, Dr. George C.S. Benson, Frank Jorgensen

Day: We had a lot of interesting things. We had a girl who was writing for Life magazine who was on the plane flying up to Auburn in the northern part of the state. She just pestered the dickens out of Dick. When she was on the plane, we couldn't do anything about it. He had to listen to and put up with her. But she was really a pest. She just really bugged him. He was trying to think what he wanted to say in the speech when he got to Auburn. He was really upset with her because she was getting awfully sticky with her questions, I remember. He told me afterwards, "I think if there was any way of doing it, I'd have thrown her off the plane." [laughter] He usually doesn't say things like that, but he was really burned up. She was a little ridiculous. She didn't use much tact. She was sent to cover the speech, so she was really covering it before she got there [laughter].

Fry: She practically stopped the campaign whole in the process.

Day: In most of the places it was real nice. We were very well treated. It was very enjoyable. I really enjoyed that trip.

Fry: You were going up through the San Joaquin Valley with him?

Day: Yes.

Fry: You were able then to observe his speeches. It looks like there was an important give-and-take there, one of the few instances where Richard Nixon and Helen Douglas did tangle on an issue. Otherwise it looked as if Helen Douglas was talking about her things here, and Nixon was ralking about different things here, and they never really argued with each other.

Day: Yes. The place they tangled was the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco. That is where they tangled. He blew her out of the water there, and so she just managed not to be with him. But she was following Dick until we caught up with this girl, who was on the Douglas payroll and was working in our place and knew what our schedule was. They got rid of her.

Fry: How did you find her out?

Day: Murray Chotiner dug it up some way. He found out because he was sort of running the office in Los Angeles and was in there all the time. He found out; he trapped her some way. I don't know exactly how they did it, but they did. They found out who it was and got rid of her.

Fry: Going up through the agricultural counties, the two candidates did differ on two issues. One was the Brannan [Secretary of Agriculture Charles F. Brannan] plan for farm subsidies, and the other was the 160-acre limitation on farm ownership for the right to use water from federal projects.

Day: I don't remember.

Fry: Did you have anything to do with talking to Mr. Nixon about these issues?

Day: No, not about those. I remember the two things, but I don't even remember the details of them now. No, I didn't have anything to do with briefing him on anything in that regard. He was briefed by people from those areas ahead of time.

Fry: Who was helping him determine the major campaign issues? Who was on the campaign staff?

Day: I'd say Brennan had an awful lot to do with determining issues. Brennan was a very shrewd campaign organizer and manager. He knew what he was doing. I had a very high regard for him. He's gone now.

Fry: How was Chotiner in picking issues and deciding what to hit?

Day: Chotiner was very good, too. He's one of the ablest men I've ever known.

Fry: How important was he compared to Brennan in deciding on issues in this campaign?

Day: Actually you can't compare them. I think you'd have to contrast them, as they were both very important. Brennan, I think, had more depth and probably would have more stature. Chotiner knew more tricks of the game maybe.

Fry: I'd like to run down some of the names here who helped on the campaign. Maybe you could help me place what their slot was in the campaign.

Day: Gee, I doubt if I know that.

Fry: I know Frank Jorgensen and J. Walton Dinkelspiel were important. A very important person, I understand, was V. John Krehbiel, who is now Ambassador Krehbiel, just retired.

Day: John Krehbiel in Los Angeles, yes.

Fry: What did he do?

Day: He helped raise money. He was one of the key people in that campaign along with Frank Jorgensen. Frank Jorgensen was a good friend of mine. I liked him.

Fry: I'll be talking to him in a couple of weeks.

Day: Are you? Tell him hello for me. Jorgensen is a real fine person. He was very active over in the San Marino area right from the start. Krehbiel was a real wheel along with Earl Adams and all those guys.

Fry: I tried to find Krehbiel.

Day: Is he alive?

Fry: Yes, he just retired.

Day: Oh yes, as ambassador.

Fry: We don't know whether he's back in the United States.

Day: I didn't know what had happened to him. Krehbiel was a substantial person in Dick's campaigns, but not in the first ones. Jorgensen was. Rodney Rood, do you have his name? R-o-o-d.

Fry: No.

Day: He was one that I worked very closely with. He was a--Richfield Oil, I think.

Fry: Yes, I was going to ask you about the role of Richfield Oil in here.

Day: They were friendly.

Fry: And Keck and that group. The reason we're interested in that is because they were so important in '52 in forming an anti-Warren delegation.

Day: Yes. Rodney Rood is somebody you should track down--I don't know what he's doing. He was rather young; he shouldn't be decrepit, yet. Oh, he's probably up pretty close to my age; I don't know.

Fry: It's really hard to find people in the Los Angeles area, because the information operator always wants to know the precise locality where they live [laughter], and there are so many areas.

Day: Rodney Rood did live in San Marino, so you might try and see if it's in the phone book. I don't know. Of course, I don't even know if he's still alive, but I'm fairly sure he is.

Fry: Now Harrison McCall--

Day: Yes. He died. He was with L.A. Testing Laboratory. He was on my first fact finding committee. He became campaign manager in the final campaign and that's what the big--

Fry: In '46?

Day: Yes, in the general election campaign, not the primary campaign. I was the primary campaign manager. Some of these papers carry the story and say he was the first campaign manager, but he wasn't. Of course, they argue that he was when Nixon was elected, but I still dispute that. That's a sore spot with me. That gets my fighting blood up when I see that. Nixon himself has straightened that out when anybody has asked him. I was manager in the primary campaign, McCall in the final campaign.

Fry: I'm glad we have those letters. What did Harrison McCall do in 1950 in the senatorial campaign? Was he involved in it?

Day: I don't know. I don't think he did much of anything. He was around locally, there around his own bailiwick.

Fry: And Jack Drown?

Day: Jack Drown has always been very close to Nixon. His wife, Helene, of course was close to Pat. Helene and Pat went shopping together the other day, I hear. Pat wore a wig of some kind. [laughter] Isn't that awful, to have to disguise themselves.

Fry: It must be terrible to be a prisoner there in their home.

Then I have Charlie Soderstrom's name down here.

Day: Oh yes, Charlie Soderstrom was very active.

Fry: What did he do?

Day: He wasn't any campaign manager or chairman or anything, but he was active. I remember his name.

Fry: In Northern California Harvey Hancock was the paid professional. Who was his equivalent in the south?

Day: In the Senate campaign?

Fry: Yes.

Day: Darned if I know; I don't remember. Earl Adams ought to know that.

Fry: Maybe Chotiner took care of everything.

Day: I didn't know that we had a paid pro. That doesn't stand. I don't recall a single person down there that was calling the shots, because Bernie was down here.

Fry: Yes. So was Chotiner, wasn't he?

Day: Yes. Well, sure. I just don't remember any paid pro.

Fry: Perhaps they didn't need anyone else.

Day: I remember Harvey Hancock was very active in Northern California.

[The following insert is taken from tape 1, side 2]

Fry: The Voorhis campaign came just at the time when the U.S. was beginning to lose its feeling of being an ally with Russia. There was a lot of concern about the way that the Communists were infiltrating labor unions and things like that.

Day: I know.

Fry: So this became one of the main themes in Nixon's campaigns.

Day: Nixon made a statement which led to Helen Gahagan Douglas and some of her supporters saying that he'd called her a Communist. But he never called her a Communist, and I know because I've traveled with him. Nixon said that she was the wife of Melvyn Douglas, who was listed as a Communist sympathizer. Her voting record paralleled that of, I think it's Vito Marcantonio, a congressman from New York.

Fry: I wanted to ask you who discovered all this and who did the research on the Marcantonio voting record.

Day: I didn't do the research, but I had the information. I don't know where we got it, but we had it. That's what Nixon said. He said that up and down the state. Douglas or some of her buddies twisted that around and accused Nixon of calling her a Communist finally.

Fry: I have some copies of your campaign literature that now and then were handed out during the Douglas campaign.

Day: Have you?

Fry: I got them out of the archives at the University of Oklahoma, believe it or not.

Day: The University of Oklahoma! [laughter]

My son-in-law was working for Governor Bellman back there. When he got out of the University of Oklahoma he worked as a public relations man in Governor Bellman's office.

Fry: Oh, yes? Well, what happened was this came from a Helen Gahagan Douglas collection. I told you there aren't any Nixon collections. I just ran through her collection there. When Douglas stepped down from Congress there happened to be a man from the University of Oklahoma walking down the halls of the House Office Building. He noticed that her office was packing up, so he asked if the university could have her papers. She said yes, so they just took them.

Day: Well, I'll be darned!

Fry: I did go through them and got what material I could from the Nixon campaign, which apparently her campaign workers had collected. In her papers there is a lot of printed material which probably was done at your printing office.

Day: Oh, yes. We printed stuff for the Senate campaign--or I wouldn't have been traveling with the campaign because I was under salary of the Progress-Bulletin at that time. I put that stuff together from the layouts and copy with him.

Fry: Oh, you did? With Nixon?

Day: Oh, yes. Nixon saw everything I did. Obviously, I'd take it over and go over it with him.

Fry: Did Chotiner help there?

Day: Chotiner saw it and went over it.

Fry: Was that an expansion of Chotiner's role over 1946?

Day: Oh, yes. Chotiner got some real money then. I think maybe $3,000 or someting, not too much at that. [laughter] Maybe $5,000; I don't know.

Fry: It doesn't sound like very much.

Day: No, I don't remember what he got for the Senate campaign. He got more than that; he must have. Of course, in the '46 campaign we didn't have much money to spend on the whole campaign. We did it by work then.

Fry: Oh, while we're talking about campaign literature we've got to talk about that famous "pink sheet" and whose brain child that was.*

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*See p. 32. Another piece of campaign material printed on pink paper was entitled "Congressman Richard Nixon for U.S. Senator 'Let's Look at the Record.'" It compared the Nixon and Douglas voting records.

[Printed on pink paper]

DOUGLAS-MARCANTONIO VOTING RECORD

Many persons have requested a comparison of the voting records of Congresswoman Helen Douglas and the notorious Communist party-liner, Congressman Vito Marcantonio of New York.

Mrs. Douglas and Marcantonio have been members of Congress together since January 1, 1945. During that period, Mrs. Douglas voted the same as Marcantonio **354** times. While it should not be expected that a member of the House of Representatives should always vote in opposition to Marcantonio, it is significant to note, not only the great number of times which Mrs. Douglas voted in agreement with him, but also the issues on which almost without exception they always saw eye to eye, to-wit: Un-American Activities and Internal Security.

Here is the Record!

VOTES AGAINST COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES

Both Douglas and Marcantonio voted against establishing the Committee on Un-American Activities. 1/3/45. Bill passed.

Both voted on three separate occasions against contempt proceedings against persons and organizations which refused to reveal records or answer whether they were Communists. 4/16/46, 6/26/46, 11/24/47. Bills passed.

Both voted on four separate occasions against allowing funds for investigation by the Un-American Activities Committee. 5/17/46, 3/9/48, 2/9/49, 3/23/50. (The last vote was 348 to 12.) All bills passed.

COMMUNIST-LINE FOREIGN POLICY VOTES

Both voted against Greek-Turkish Aid Bill. 5/9/47. (It has been established that without this aid Greece and Turkey would long since have gone behind the Iron Curtain.) Bill passed.

Both voted on two occasions against free press amendment to UNRRA appropriation bill, providing that no funds should be furnished any country which refused to allow free access to the news of activities of the UNRRA by press and radio representatives of the United States. 11/1/45, 6/28/46. Bills passed. (This would in effect have denied American relief funds to Communist dominated countries.)

Both voted against refusing Foreign Relief to Soviet-dominated countries UNLESS supervised by Americans. 4/30/47. Bill passed 324 to 75.

VOTE AGAINST NATIONAL DEFENSE

Both voted against the Selective Service Act of 1948. 6/18/48. Bill passed.

VOTES AGAINST LOYALTY AND SECURITY LEGISLATION

Both voted on two separate occasions against bills requiring loyalty checks for Federal employees. 7/15/47, 6/29/49. Bills passed.

Both voted against the Subversive Activities Control Act of 1948, requiring registration with the Attorney General of Communist party members and communist controlled organizations. Bill passed, 319 to 58. 5/19/48. AND AFTER KOREA both again voted against it. Bill passed 8/29/50, 354 to 20.

AFTER KOREA, on July 12, 1950, Marcantonio and Douglas and 12 others voted against the Security Bill, to permit the heads of key National Defense departments, such as the Atomic Energy Commission, to discharge government workers found to be poor security risks! Bill passed, 327 to 14.

VOTE AGAINST CALIFORNIA

Both recorded against confirming title to Tidelands in California and the other states affected. 4/30/48. Bill passed 257-29.

VOTES AGAINST CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION OF COMMUNIST AND OTHER ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES

Both voted against investigating the "whitewash" of the AMERASIA case. 4/18/46. Bill passed.

Both voted against investigating why the Soviet Union was buying as many as 60,000 United States patents at one time. 3/4/47. Bill passed.

Both voted against continuing investigation of numerous instances of illegal actions by OPA and the War Labor Board. 1/18/45. Bill passed.

Both voted on two occasions against allowing Congress to have access to government records necessary to the conduct of investigations by Senate and House Committees. 4/22/48, 5/13/48. Bills passed.

ON ALL OF THE ABOVE VOTES which have occurred since Congressman Nixon took office on January 1, 1947, HE has voted *exactly opposite* to the Douglas-Marcantonio Axis!

After studying the voting comparison between Mrs. Douglas and Marcantonio, is it any wonder that the Communist line newspaper, the Daily People's World, in its lead editorial on January 31, 1950, labeled Congressman Nixon as "The Man To Beat" in this Senate race and that the Communist newspaper, the New York Daily Worker, in the issue of July 28, 1947, selected Mrs. Douglas along with Marcantonio as "One of the Heroes of the 80th Congress."

REMEMBER! The United States Senate votes on ratifying international treaties and confirming presidential appointments. Would California send Marcantonio to the United States Senate?

NIXON FOR U. S. SENATOR CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
John Walton Dinkelspiel, Chairman
1151 Market Street
San Francisco—UNderhill 3-1416

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA
B. M. Hoblick, Chairman
820 Van Ness Avenue
Fresno—Phone 44116

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
Bernard Brennan, Chairman
117 W. 9th St., Los Angeles
TRinity 0661

Day: The "pink sheet"? [puzzlement]

Fry: The "pink sheet." I wish I had a copy with me but I don't.

Day: When? In the Helen Gahagan deal?

Fry: In the Helen Gahagan Douglas campaign. The account in one of the books I read suggested that this was a very important turning point maybe in the campaign, or at least an acceleration of it, because it was so graphic. It was Helen Douglas's record put up alongside Vito Marcantonio's.

Day: Oh yes.

Fry: The story I got--I shouldn't tell it to you because I want to get your story on it.

Day: Well, I don't remember the story on it.

Fry: The story in the book was that Chotiner said to whoever was printing it--you had some pink paper stacked around--"Hey, that's great, instead of just plain black and white," because the whole inference then was the connection with the New York Communist member of Congress.

Day: I don't remember whether we printed that thing or not. We probably did, because I did all of his printing. And I did everything when he ran for governor, I know.

Fry: Probably during the heat of the campaign it seemed like just one more thing you printed up.

Day: It probably did. I can't remember the darned thing. The pink is throwing me. I just don't remember. But, as I say, I can't remember people's names even. That's what bugs me sometimes--things I should remember and I don't. I do remember we had something contrasting their records, I should say. But I don't remember the pink. Isn't that funny? It seems like I'd remember that.

Fry: Oh dear, and we can't ask Chotiner about it anymore.

Day: Oh, he's gone. Well, there are people--

Fry: At the time it was probably just one of many that you printed up.

Day: Oh, yes.

Fry: But as historians go back over the campaign they always pick that sheet out as something that was important.

Day: I'll be darned!

Fry: I don't know whether it had that much of an impact at the time or not. That was the other question I wanted to ask you, if you felt that it did have an impact.

Day: I don't remember. It's a funny part. I was only one cog in the Senate campaign. That was a statewide deal. Bernie Brennan did call me to travel with Nixon because they knew I could get him in and out of crowds. I seem to have--at least they thought I had--ability in a certain area that most of the campaign staff didn't have. They didn't know how to handle it. The trick was to do it without offending people, to get him shaken loose. You had to come up with some reason. You had to do something.

I remember the last meeting was at Kenny Washington's home, the black football player. Dick kidded with him and he really lightened it up. He said he had the best seat at Whittier for all the football games; he was on the bench. [laughter] He kidded with Kenny Washington.

Fry: Was that the senatorial campaign.

Day: Yes, the Senate deal. That was the night before the election. We came back. We'd been up north someplace, Santa Barbara or somewhere. The night before the election we were in Los Angeles.

Fry: Were you with Nixon?

Day: I was with him. Yes, we had a deal down there. This is where Helen Gahagan Douglas had claimed that was her congressional district. Nixon made a point that she hadn't lived there, didn't even live in the district, which she didn't. We did blast her about that. She was trying to claim all that vote down there as her home bailiwick.

Fry: Yes, she lived outside the district, which was legal.

Day: I know. That's one thing I remember. Some of these things come back to me, but it's hard on me to remember all this stuff so long ago.

Fry: You've been in so many campaigns.

Day: Oh, I know it. [laughter]

Fry: From school board on up.

Day: Yes, I'm thinking now when I've got to suit up. They've lost three of them and now are supposed to win this one.

[end insert from tape 1, side 2]

Nixon's Decision to Run for the Senate

Fry: There's a very important point here that we need to back up and cover. That's your conversation with Nixon when he was trying to decide to run for the Senate or not, or you were trying to get him to decide to run. You just mentioned it in passing in your interview with Paul Bullock from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Day: Several of us met over in Tom Bewley's law office, I guess it was.

Fry: That was Nixon's old law partner?

Day: Yes. We talked about whether he should run or not. Herman Perry didn't want him to run. Perry said, "You're going to crucify this young man if you send him out and run him." He was really upset about it.

Fry: He thought it wasn't the time?

Day: No, he just wanted to keep Dick in Congress. You know, his buddy from Whittier. So I made the crack there, "When your star is up, that's when you have to move." Dick had just made the limelight with the Alger Hiss case. That's where Nixon made his move. That's where he got in the limelight, because he, practically alone, dragged that out. That's where the press started to hate him, the liberal press, and they've hated him from that day to this.

Now, I don't know that you should--well, I guess this is all right.

Fry: You can put it under seal for as many years as you want to.

Day: No, this is all right. I don't think there's any reason why I shouldn't tell you.

What happened was Dick wanted me to meet him ahead of this meeting in Bewley's office. So I met with him at a little restaurant over there somewhere west of Whittier. I can't remember the name of the place. Dick said that he had been all up and down the state, and he'd decided that he wanted to run, and he wanted me to push for it when we went into that meeting.

So I said, "Okay. Are you sure you want to run?"

He said, "Yes." He had some inkling that Sheridan Downey was going to drop out, which hadn't happened at that point. Dick felt that his chances were pretty--that he had a shot at it anyway.



Roy Day and Richard Nixon
1950 Senatorial Campaign



Left to right:
Roy O. Day, Jr.
Diana Day Brady
Florine Day (Mrs. Roy)
President Nixon
Roy O. Day
Patti Day
Linda Day Dickerson

To The Roy Day family
With every good wish
from
Dick Nixon

1-25-72

Day: So, my job when we sat down in the circle--I managed to sit on the end of the semicircle facing him. When he got ready to talk to us he looked around, knowing darn well who he was going to call first. He called on me. So, I made the sales pitch. When I got through they didn't have anything left to talk about. [laughter]

Fry: Nixon knew who to pick to do that, yes.

Day: Well, I knew he was going to do that, see. The decision was made and an announcement came out, and that was it.

Fry: Who was present at this meeting?

Day: There was about seven of us there, I remember. I think Frank Jorgensen was there. I believe Pat Hillings was in on it, if I remember right. I know Tom Bewley was there, and of course the banker [laughter] who didn't want him to run. I don't know whether Harrison McCall was there. I think Harrison McCall was there. It was a very small group.

Fry: Since I'm somewhat unacquainted with the way these different relationships operated, I should ask you if this was a group of people who really were key people?

Day: Oh, yes.

Fry: Could they have stopped him right at that point if they hadn't wanted him to run?

Day: Yes, if we had all come out against him--told him not to--I don't think he would have run. But he made up his mind what to do.

Fry: What was the next step then, after he had the approval of these people?

Day: Well, he got busy to get his announcement ready.

Fry: He just went right into it?

Day: Yes.

Fry: Well, I think we've covered most things. I have too many other questions to ask you, to go on. [laughter] We haven't covered your work with him in those subsequent campaigns.

Day: I was east San Gabriel Valley chairman in the 1960 presidential campaign. I tried my best to stop him from running for governor in 1962, but I couldn't do it.

Fry: Oh, tell about that.

Day: I just told him that I didn't think people would buy it.

Fry: Was this at a meeting?

Day: No, I did that privately. I couldn't get anywhere with it.

Fry: Is that the time when you flew back to New York to talk to him?

Day: No, it was in California. I just told him I didn't think people would go for a candidate stepping down after a defeat. I said I thought it was a mistake. But I was out-voted by the powerhouse in Los Angeles and I think, actually--I don't know who got to him, really. I think people in Los Angeles talked him into it. Maybe Earl Adams and that gang; I don't know.

Fry: That group and the intersection of Sixth Street and Grand Avenue in L.A.?

Day: Yes.

Fry: I was amazed, as my interviews stacked up, they were all located right there, which certainly simplifies parking problems.

Day: The Rowan Building. You bomb the Rowan building and you'd get rid of half of them. [laughter] Well, Bob Rowan was a good friend of mine, too. You ought to interview Bob Rowan. I don't know where he is, but he was very active. He owns the Rowan building. He's quite a guy. I don't know whether he's president of anything. No, he's just got money. He's a nice guy.

Fry: Where did this group enter Nixon's career--at the senatorial campaign level?

Day: Well, most of them did. They participated in the first presidential election [1968] and then for this re-election [1972] he probably sent his own henchmen out here, all new, with this guy from a college down here.

Fry: What college? Pomona?

Day: No, down in Los Angeles. The guy you read about who's talking about running for something--Senate. Oh, heck. I've got the letters from him.

Fry: I probably have missed his aspirations for the Senate, so I can't help you.

Day: Well, he won't get anywhere. The president of Pepperdine College, William Banowsky. He was a guy that was really running the show in the '72 campaign. He was going around the organization. They had me

Day: into the county committee meeting with a lot of the people. I told them what I thought of it. I said, "Not a way to run a campaign. You can't ignore the party organization." The Committee to Re-elect the President were running the whole deal and ignoring the Republican organization. The Republican organization was kind of weak, I'll admit, but you don't slap them in the face. The Committee to Re-elect should have just added to the party organization but not ignored it. They absolutely ignored the party organization. So, I'm not too hot for that guy.

Day's Tasks for Nixon in 1952

Fry: Well, I will let you go. Even though we didn't talk about 1952.

Day: Well Honey, I don't really know much. I really don't have much I can give you on that that's of interest to you. We should get the people--

Fry: We always want to know when the vice-presidency idea came up and who backed that.

Day: I didn't have anything to do with that, really. It just happened. I just knew about it when it happened and that was it. I was through with it, really, after the Senate campaign pretty much, as far as being an activist anyway. Except I've always had some assignment with the campaigns.

Fry: Didn't you tell me, off-tape, that you went to later conventions as a guest?

Day: I was a guest in '52.

Fry: Tell about what you did at the 1952 convention about Taft.

Day: My assignment was this. Some of the California leaders that I had respect for said, "Roy, this is something you could do that would be very effective. See what you can do to discourage them on Taft." So I decided the thing to do was just not tear down Taft, because that would build his strength up actually, and being from California and so on, it was no smart thing to do. So, I went around and I'd say, "Isn't it too bad that Taft is such a wonderful person, but he's just not electable. It's just a shame." I'd shake my head from side to side and put on a forlorn look and then go on and talk to somebody else. I made the elevators and I made the restaurants--anybody I could find to talk to. I proved very successful because it really



Richard Nixon and Roy Day
January 25, 1978



"Best wishes to my first campaign manager & good friend - Roy Day
Sincerely,
Dick Nixon "



Kickoff Campaign for Vice President 1952 at Pomona Southern Pacific Railroad Station.
Left to right: Laughlin Waters, Diana and Linda Day, George Murphy, Pat and Richard Nixon.

Day: spread. I really covered the hotel lobbies. I did a job of it. Nixon knows about this; he knows what I was doing. That was my assignment in '52.

Fry: Did you help any during the campaign after the convention in '52?

Day: I just locally helped set up some meetings in the east San Gabriel Valley around--oh, from the eastern part of Los Angeles County. I helped set up some meetings and worked with the local organizations. I didn't do a whole lot though.

Fry: Were you here when that rather sensational story broke about the Nixon fund?

Day: Yes, I was on television in Washington. In '48, wasn't it?

Fry: Fifty-two.

Day: Fifty-two?

Fry: With Eisenhower, remember. Nixon had to fly back and Eisenhower met him.

Day: No, it was the $18,000 deal they were talking about. They had me on television in Washington about that.

Fry: Oh, what were you doing in Washington?

Day: I happened to be back there on a trip. So some station back there put me on television and I refuted the whole thing. I said the fund was completely legitimate. I said that it wasn't from a group of millionaires. I said there's only one on there that had a big bank roll and that'd be the Rowans. I said that they were just a group that raised this money to do this job. So I went on the air, defending him on that, on a station in Washington, D.C. I was on the Fulton broadcast.

Fry: Fulton Lewis, Jr.?

Day: Fulton Lewis Jr. I thought that was in '48. Wasn't it?

Fry: No, that was resolved when Eisenhower met Nixon at the airport and said, "He's my boy!"

Day: Oh, yes. I was back there, anyway, at that time. So, they stuck me on the air. That's about the same time Earl Mazo interviewed me, too, down in a hotel room.

Fry: Oh, he did? For his book?

Day: Yes. That's where he got me. He talked to me for quite a while about it. I don't know whether it was during that trip or another one that Earl Mazo talked to me. I can't even remember when. Mazo collared me in my hotel room, worked me over.

Fry: Tell me what you think about his book. Do you think it's fairly accurate?

Day: Yes, I do. I think it's one that's quite accurate--the parts that I know anything about. [pause]

Fry: We didn't get to talk about your trip to Honolulu. You said that was set up by Nixon?

Day: He said he got Charlie Thomas to give me that trip. I came back on this crazy wooden flying boat.

Fry: What was Charlie Thomas at the time?

Day: Secretary of the Navy.

Fry: Oh, yes. And what was the purpose of your trip?

Day: That was the one handout I've had all the time I've--

Fry: That's your complete payment? [laughter]

Day: Yes. I am proud of all aid I have given in campaigns, and of the men who received any help from me. If more of our citizens would participate, and not just opinionate, our government would rapidly regain the plateau of integrity and sensible progress our forefathers intended for it.

Fry: I really will let you go this time. Thanks for being so patient.

[end tape 2, side 1]
[end interview]

Transcriber: Marlene Keller
Final Typist: Keiko Sugimoto

APPENDIX A -- Partial Listing of Original Members of Committee of One Hundred

12/11/78

This is from my files and is original list of members of Committee that met & picked Nixon in 1946.

Names crossed off were on Committee & only deleted years later for some other reason. This list is original. It does not contain names of elected Republicans used to build Committee to 100 after we first met. These were picked by me with consultation around 2nd & 12th District

Roy Day

MEMBERS OF FACT FINDING COMMITTEE NIXON COMMITTEE OF 100
49th District

Chairman, ~~Roy O.~~ Day P. O. Box 1372 Pomona

George W. Meier	615 San Gabriel,	Azusa
C. B. Shoemaker	900 Hicrest,	Glendora
Leo M. Meeker	875 Hampton Road	Arcadia
Hugh Stiles	Amherst and Bradford	La Verne
Mrs. Myron Powell	550 W. Harrison	Claremont
Mack E. Wright	~~1556 Ganesha Place~~ 1313 Val Vista	Pomona
Walker W. Downs	~~2050 4th Street~~ 550 De Anza Blvd	~~La Verne~~ San Dimas
Vernon Yost	128 E. Lemon	Monrovia
Walter L. Gatten	920 Harvard Ave.	Claremont
Ralph Connor	125 East Colorado Blvd.	Monrovia
Mrs. W. M. Harris	~~1316 E. Fifth Avenue~~ 491 E. La Verne Ave	Pomona
Herbert Jack	1104 E. Meda	Glendora
Richard Helwig	315 San Antonio Road	Arcadia
Fred Harmsen	1101 Foothill Blvd.	La Verne
Robert Radford	129 E. Colorado Blvd.	Monrovia
J. D. Johnson	2034 No. Mills	Claremont
Mrs. Clarence Steele	167 No. San Dimas Ave.	San Dimas
Mrs. Anita Fuhr	1033 N. Soldano Street	Azusa
Mrs. Arthur Brandes	805 Norumbega Drive	Monrovia
Mrs. Roy Ferguson	P. O. Box 96	Glendora
Mr. Sam Gist	400 West Second St.	Pomona

Assemblyman Ernest R. Geddes 560 W. Harrison Claremont

Mrs Era Shepherd 4560 N. Center Blvd Ed - 7-1068

Dr. W. A. Morrison 1916 Fourth Blvd Duarte Baldwin Park

50th DISTRICT

Former Assemblyman ~~Assemblyman~~ Thomas M. Erwin	1136 Willow	La Puente
✓ Charles E. Cooper	1649 Ontario Street	Corona (Rt.
✓ Lance D. Smith	15825½ E. Main Street	La Puente
✓ Judge Gerald C. Kepple	5749 Valley Oak Drive	Los Angeles
✓ Willard J. Larson	627 Rhea Vista Drive	Whittier
✓ Mrs. Ralph Robbins	705 N. Earlham Drive	Whittier
✓ John W. Johnson	421 Mildred Street	El Monte
✓ Porter Kerckhoff		Covina
✓ Carl Bras	14936 E. Palm Avenue	La Puente
✓ Mrs. C. J. Taylor		La Puente
✓ Harold Lutz	Bank of America	Whittier
✓ ~~Mrs.~~ Mrs. Harvey Stewart	Box 691	La Puente
✓ John Wood	101 S. Lemon Ave.	Walnut
✓ Mrs. J. A. McGee	Franklin & College	Whittier
✓ Mrs. Genevieve Tedrow	816 W. Mildred	El Monte
✓ Mrs. Guy Morelock	221 Walnut Street	El Monte
✓ Lyle Spilman	3052 No. Richmond	El Monte
✓ Charles Thomas	8907 Bexley Drive	Pico
✓ Louis Sawyer	Whittier National Trust & Savings Bank	Whittier
✓ Ralph Chase	631 N. Washington	Whittier
✓ Frank Blake	520 No. Friends	Whittier
✓ Mrs. Hazel T. Rhodes	3460 Turnbull Canyon Road	Whittier
✓ Clyde Nelson	14385 Oak Rd	Temple City

53rd DISTRICT

✓ Assemblyman Montivel A. Burke	100 No. First	Alhambra
✓ Leo E. Anderson	120 W. Sierra Madra	Arcadia
✓ Mrs. H. J. Garretson	481 Prospect Circle	So. Pasadena
✓ Mrs. K.D. Hotchkiss	1415 Circle Drive	San Marino
✓ Judge Frederick F. Houser	State Bldg.	Los Angeles
✓ Roy P. McLaughlin	2055 Milan Avenue	So. Pasadena
~~Mrs. Albert B. Ruddock~~		Santa Barbara
✓ Harrison McCall	1625 Laurel Avenue	So. Pasadena
~~Judge~~ William Martin (Attorney)	West Covina	Citrus Municipal Court Glendora ~~Glendora~~ State Bldg. LA
✓ Judge McIntyre Faries		
~~Herbert Spencer~~		Pasadena
✓ Roy P. Crocker	1015 Highland	South Pasadena
✓ Ron Stever	~~1360 Hereford dr.~~ 505 S. Acacia Glyn	~~San Marino~~ SY 6-56
✓ Earle C. Adams	440 Van Nuys Bldg.	Los Angeles
✓ Dr. A. Kenneth Spencer	403 Alhambra Professional Bldg.	Alhambra
✓ J. H. Strube	1005 S. Second Street	Alhambra
✓ Mrs. Eunice Lowell	512 W. Foothill Blvd.	Arcadia
✓ J. A. Sloan	650 Grand Avenue	So. Pasadena
✓ Robert French	2-22 Hampton Court B Almanac	Alhambra
✓ Rockwood C. Nelson	2890 Monterey Road	San Marino
~~Frank Jorgensen~~	Regional Manager, Group Division Metropolitan Life Insurance Co.	680 Stockton St. San Fra
~~Shannon F. Hamilton~~	437 North Cordova	Alhambra
~~Mrs. Frances McDonald~~	Sierra Vista	Alhambra
✓ Mrs. Daisy Sherwood	314 S. First Street	Alhambra att'd
✓ Arthur Kruse	200 W. Main Street / Boy State 44	Alhambra
~~Judge Lester Steers~~		Monterey Park
~~Mrs. Charles Haas~~	Pascual Street	San Gabriel

53rd DISTRICT (cont.)

✓ L. K. Boardman	115 Highcliffe	Garvey
✓ Mrs. Roy Ensign	2047 Courtland	San Marino
✓ Mr. Monroe Reuland	2504 El ~~Roses~~ Paseo	Alhambra
✓ John J. Garland	W. M. Garland Bldg.	117 W. 9th St. Los Angeles 15
~~Mrs. Rosetta Case Broadwell~~	~~526 Baltimore Ave.~~	Monterey Park
~~Herbert S. Farrell~~	~~300 S. Chapel St.~~	~~Alhambra~~
✓ Mrs. Rex P. Harbert	235 E. Graystone Ave.	Monrovia

Pomona, California
October 13, 1945

Dr. Walter F. Dexter,
State Supt. of Public Instruction,
Sacramento, Calif.

Dear Walter,

I have intended writing you sooner, but have been very busy between two assignments, my regular job, and setting up this candidate and fact finding committee which you know something of by now.

To give you the entire picture - from past experience I know it is useless and hopeless to spend our time prior to the primary fighting among ourselves, then come up with a minority candidate, set up a campaign organization, iron out injured feelings, raise money, and even hope to beat the incumbent new deal congressman. To get on the right track, I worked out a plan, parallel in idea, at least to some degree, to an overall plan of the Los Angeles County Central Committee, adapting it to fit our picture in the Twelfth District. This plan calls for the setting up of a district wide candidate and fact finding committee, comprising all leaders of all republican organizations, both men and women, in the district. To these are added outstanding men and women not identified with any organization, political in nature, to give us an excellent cross section of political thinking and wishes in our area. These men and women are charged with the responsibility of combing the district for the most capable and electable candidates for Congress and State Legislature, and inviting them to participate in our meetings, be heard, questioned, etc. Finally, and we hope before the end of November, we will endorse ONE candidate, set up a finance committee, public relations committee, campaign organization, and unite our efforts to elect this one man or woman our congressman or congresswoman. We cannot deprive anyone from running if they so desire, however, anyone would think at least twice before they would buck the strength of this group and hope to get anywhere. For your information, this plan has already eliminated Tom Ball, who ran in the primary last time.

I am getting remarkable support from many men and women, new in politics, and I believe the feeling is widespread, that Republicanism must be rebuilt on a new, modern, streamlined basis, learning many things from our adversaries in the matter of conducting campaigns. This district wants to go Republican, but it wants a candidate we can be really FOR and not just register a protest vote against Jerry Voorhis. We can't win that way, and we all know it.

NOW, this is where you come into the picture Walter. At a certai

informal gathering I attended in San Marino, and was asked who we could get with a name and sufficient standing in the district, worthy of a really all-out effort, I suggested your name. It caught on immediately, not alone because of your present statewide and nationwide reputation, but because of certain factors which work in your favor in a race with Voorhis. He has had the advantage in the past because he would follow our candidate at service clubs, had access to all churches, and would gain votes by comparison. This he definitely cannot do against you, as you would make him appear to be a schoolboy on the platform against you. While I am chairman of this committee and will conduct all proceedings in an impartial manner, I do want you to very seriously consider this matter from all angles, and be in position to give us an answer when you get down south on the 25th. We have purposely postponed our next meeting until the 2nd of November for this reason, and one other.

The other reason is Lt. Comdr. Nixon, also of Whittier, who is very much interested in this race, and whom we are interested in knowing more about. I recall that you spoke very highly of him in our telephone conversation. Others under consideration include Capt. Sam Gist, a returned veteran of two wars, member of our lions club incidentally, Assemblyman Geddes, who does not intend to run, but threw his name into the picture, Judge Harry Hunt, of San Gabriel, who seems to have good standing in his community, but has shown no signsof wanting to really get into this race. I believe his strategy is to wait and play "hard to get", which has already backfired with the committee. The other man is Lt. Andrew Porter (navy), formerly mayor of South Pasadena, just returned to civilian life. He seems to be a fine young man, with good background, but so far I fail to see in him the dash and fire necessary to knock over Voorhis.

I know Walter that very powerful interests want to sit down and talk this over with you or go to bat for you if you will make a definite decision to go into the race. I feel certain that you could and would win, after a strenous, hard campaign. I do not know enough about anyone else in the picture to have this same confidence, at least at present.

I believe this letter gives you the picture as it stands at this time. We are all tremendously interested in your decision and trust you will be able to make one very soon.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX C -- Brief Autobiographical Summary

ROY O. DAY
1190 Casa Vista Drive
Pomona, California 91768

"MY CHECKERED CAREER"

Native Son, Born Pomona, 1900. Attended Pomona Schools. Left High School for Navy 2 years. Worked as Secretary United Fruit Company, Puerto Limona, Costa Rica, 2 years. One Year in Ray, Arizona, as Secretary Ray Con Copper Co., and pitching semi-pro Baseball there.

Came home and joined advertising staff of what is now Pomona Progress-Bulletin as salesman, Classified, then Display Advertising. Then followed Commercial Printing, until 3years ago.

After 27 years with Progress-Bulletin, purchased Commercial Printing Dept. and formed Day Printing Corporation, now very successful in this area, including much work for Disneyland.

During this time became closely associated and headed many Political and Civic Campaigns, at Federal and local levels. Launched political campaigns of Richard M. Nixon, Congressman John Rousselot, former Congressman Patrick Hillings, State Comptroller Houston Flournoy, and many, many lesser lights. Only lost one out of over twenty campaigns had direct leadership of. Others included Assyblmn Ernest Geddes and Supervisor Schab

Sold business three years ago, retaining life income and working position for my wife, Florine.

Four children, all successful in their own right; Mrs. Mason (Linda) Dickerson, Mrs. Robert (Diana) Brady, Miss Patricia Day, (named for Patricia Nixon) and Roy Otis Day Jr. unmarried.

Since retirement I have kept "alive" by active participation in Community, State and National Affairs. In my studied opinion our beloved Country would be better off if there was a decided increase in "people participation" by concerned citizens, rather than just by those segments with a small axe to grind.

Roy Otis Day

Roy Otis Day

For Amelia R. Fry
Project Director

APPENDIX D

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

WESTERN UNION

1201

A. N. WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

SYMBOLS

DL = Day Letter
NL = Night Letter
LC = Deferred Cable
NLT = Cable Night Letter
Ship Radiogram

The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

1943 OCT 9 AM 8

S24 NL PD=SACRAMENTO CALIF OCT 8

ROY O DAY=

POMONA PROGRESS BULLETIN POMONA CALIF=

JUST LEAVING FOR FOUR DAY TRIP NORTHERN PART OF STATE. HAVE GIVEN SERIOUS CONSIDERATION FROM EVERY POINT OF VIEW TO YOUR SUGGESTION WHICH I DEEPLY APPRECIATE. I AM NOT CERTAIN THAT I SHOULD NOT BECOME A CANDIDATE IN THE TWELFTH DISTRICT. WILL BE BACK IN SACRAMENTO NEXT MONDAY=

WALTER F DEXTER.

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

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John Walton Dinkelspiel

Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library

University of California
Berkeley, California

Earl Warren Oral History Office

John Walton Dinkelspiel

RECOLLECTIONS OF RICHARD NIXON'S 1950 SENATORIAL CAMPAIGN IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

An Interview Conducted by
Amelia R. Fry
in 1975

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INTERVIEW HISTORY--John Walton Dinkelspiel

Dates of Interviews: January 31, and March 24, 1975

Place of Interviews: Mr. Dinkelspiel's law office on the 18th floor of Steuart Street Tower, at One Market Plaza, San Francisco

Those Present: Mr. Dinkelspiel and the interviewer

Federal Judge Albert Wollenberg, a former interviewee who was close to Earl Warren, recommended that we interview Mr. Dinkelspiel as an informed source on the Nixon side of the 1950 Republican campaign and the 1952 Republican convention, especially because he would "give a good straightforward account."

Mr. Dinkelspiel not only donated his time and memory, but also more than the normal amount of preparation by looking through his papers and scrapbook beforehand. In addition, the Regional Oral History Office sent him the usual memory-boosters: notes from newspaper files on the campaigns. The San Francisco Examiner was chosen as a source because it has the fullest accounts on early Nixon campaigns. At the second session the interviewer brought pertinent primary and general election reports on campaign donations and expenses filed with the California Secretary of State. (These reports are only partial pictures of campaign finance, but at least they contain names of campaign personnel and committees as well as types of services contracted for by candidates.)

For a jumping-off point, the account of the 1950 campaign in Earl Mazo's Richard Nixon: A Political and Personal Portrait (New York, 1959) was used and for 1952 Mr. Dinkelspiel's own copy of the convention Proceedings served as a guide.

As the northern California chairman of Nixon's 1950 senatorial campaign, Mr. Dinkelspiel affords us a view of Nixon somewhat different from the high visibility and old-friend network enjoyed by the young congressman in southern California. Dinkelspiel and others had hardly heard of Nixon in 1949, and the San Francisco Chronicle was slow to affirm the Nixon candidacy. Too, the distinction between "Warren Republicans" and what became "Nixon Republicans" was not as sharp in the north, where there was more overlapping of campaign workers, at least in these early years.

This long-time San Francisco attorney answered the questions in a style that was a mix of social conversation and a legal deposition. Above all, he wanted to be accurate and if he could not be sure of his memory, he said so. At one point he asked that a sentence of two be erased because he did not

want names mentioned, although the context seemed harmless enough to the interviewer. We sent the transcript to him for review in December 1978, and Mr. Dinkelspiel returned it to us with his remarks in April 1979. He made some corrections in the transcript and answered all our queries about ambiguities.

Amelia R. Fry
Interviewer-Editor

August 1980
Washington, D.C.

I THE EARL WARREN DELEGATION AT THE 1952 CONVENTION

[Interview 1: January 31, 1975]
[begin tape 1, side 1]

En Route to Chicago: Nixon Boards at Denver

Fry: I think the first thing we need is your relationship with Earl Warren--your father's and yours and your brother's.

Dinkelspiel: I had known Governor Warren for many years, but not intimately. My family, however, have had many years' association with him, going back to my father at the time Earl Warren was the district attorney of Alameda County. This is just from memory, and I possibly can get you more detailed information. Earl Warren, my father (Henry G.-like-George, W.-like-Washington, Dinkelspiel) and a third person were active members of the Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West, an organization which established the Homeless Children Agency of California, an adoption society in the days when adoptions were much rarer than they are today. Thereafter, and from time to time, I would meet Earl Warren, but I never was what I would call an intimate friend of his or associate.

I became active in the Republican party about 1950. In 1952, when the California delegation was being created for attendance at the Chicago convention, it was more or less determined (with the exception of certain musts such as Senator [William F.] Knowland; Senator [Richard M.] Nixon; McIntyre Faries, who was then the national committeeman; Majorie Benedict, who was then the national committeewoman; and certain other persons) that the delegation would be composed generally speaking of one-third the so-called nominees of Earl Warren, one-third nominees proposed by Senator Knowland, and one-third nominees proposed by Senator Nixon, who was then the junior Senator from California, having been

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Dinkelspiel: elected in 1950. On that basis the delegation was established. When I refer to delegation, I refer to the seventy delegates and seventy alternates.

The California delegation was pledged to Earl Warren, who had been opposed in the primaries by Tom Werdel of Bakersfield. Earl Warren defeated him by at least two to one. The delegation went to Chicago via a special Western Pacific train. The first stop was at the state capitol in Sacramento where we met the then-governor Earl Warren and greeted him. After a luncheon all of the delegates and persons on the train, there being a number of people who were not delegates or alternates, boarded the train, including Senator Knowland and Governor Warren.

Fry: Senator Knowland was on the train? I couldn't find his name on this list of passengers.

Dinkelspiel: He was there. My best recollection was that he was on the train. Senator Nixon was not on the train. But when we arrived at, I believe it was Denver or some intermediate stop, Senator Nixon, who had been in Chicago, joined the group. He reported that in his opinion, notwithstanding that we were pledged to Earl Warren, that Governor Warren, in the face of the developments in Washington, had very little if any chance--

Fry: You mean the developments in Chicago?

Dinkelspiel: Yes. Nixon reported that Governor Warren had very little if any chance of getting the nomination. He said that the two top contenders were Eisenhower and Robert Taft, and that he, Nixon, felt that the California delegation should therefore place its strength in favor of Eisenhower.

A great majority of the California delegation in my opinion were favorable toward Eisenhower at least as a second choice, rather than Taft. In other words if they could not elect Warren, a majority would definitely, in my opinion, have supported Eisenhower.

Fry: I don't understand exactly what Nixon was proposing. Was he trying to get them to vote that way on the first ballot, or was he telling people that the vote would go that way?

Dinkelspiel: No, I think Nixon felt that, in view of the fact that in his opinion Warren's chances were not good, that the California delegation could effectively insure Eisenhower's victory by voting for Eisenhower forthwith; that the impetus of the seventy California votes, if they could be counted on by the

Dinkelspiel: Eisenhower people, would have a very strong effect on the convention and would probably be very effective in defeating any possible Taft bandwagon movement.

Fry: Did Nixon talk to you about this? You've told us a good story, but now put yourself into it. Let us know where you were.

Dinkelspiel: There were several meetings in various staterooms on the train which I attended, in which he expressed that view to me and to other people who had been appointed to the delegation by him, or at least people whose names had been suggested to the delegation by Nixon.

Fry: Were you one of the people that Nixon had suggested?

Dinkelspiel: Yes.

Fry: The timing of this still isn't clear to me. Did Nixon feel that it should be made publicly known that the delegation would throw its strength to Eisenhower as soon as it could? Is that what he wanted?

Dinkelspiel: Yes.

Fry: Even though the delegation probably would have to vote for Warren on the first ballot?

Dinkelspiel: Yes, either that the delegation should not vote for Warren on the first ballot, if Warren were willing, or if he insisted that the delegation keep its pledge, that it be made known in advance that the delegation at least on the second ballot would vote for Eisenhower rather than Taft, not just sit back and not state its position.

Fry: The possibility of the convention hitting a deadlock between Taft and Eisenhower was one of the things that Earl Warren was counting on. By the time Nixon boarded the train, was this--

Dinkelspiel: I think that is correct. I think that Governor Warren recognized at that time that he would not and could not and did not have sufficient pre-convention votes to have a chance for the nomination. But he did hope, I think, that there was a chance of a deadlock between Eisenhower and Taft, and that he was the logical person to pick up the nomination in that event.

Fry: What were the pro-Warren delegates feeling at this point? Did any of them think that there was any chance yet for Warren?

Dinkelspiel: I gather that some of them did. They must have, because the decision, as expressed by Senator Knowland, was that the California delegation would stand pat on its pledge. That position was continued although the California delegation, which was headquartered at the Knickerbocker Hotel in Chicago, did have caucus at which both Senator Taft and General Eisenhower attended and expressed their opinions to the delegates. That is the customary and traditional way of wooing votes.

The Fair Play Amendment

Dinkelspiel: The situation in Chicago developed into somewhat of a further crisis, if you will term it that, in reference to the advisability of a vote on the first ballot because of a situation which developed in the seating of the Georgia delegation and the delegation from Texas, but in particular the seating of the so-called Georgia delegation.* This seating dispute created an issue between the Eisenhower and the Taft people and gave an absolute decision on what was to happen when the two candidates came up for a vote. It was a very heated situation.

Fry: I believe that was the minority vote of the--

Dinkelspiel: Credentials committee.

Fry: Credentials committee of the convention.

Dinkelspiel: That's correct. You're quite right.

Fry: The majority had voted to set the rule so that the pro-Taft delegates would win, and the minority--

---

*This seating dispute, usually referred to as the "Fair Play Amendment" issue, revolved around which delegates from contested southern delegations, the pro-Taft or the pro-Eisenhower, would be allowed to vote on the remaining contests.

Dinkelspiel: That is correct. I'm sure that if you look in this transcript of the convention, you'll find it all written out in there.

Fry: [flips through some papers] This is the Twenty-fifth Republican National Convention proceedings.*

Dinkelspiel: After the vote of the convention for its adoption of the minority report of the credentials committee, which resulted in the seating of the pro-Eisenhower Georgia delegation and the unseating of the pro-Taft delegation, the "handwriting," if one would use that word, was pretty well written that General Eisenhower was going to win the nomination, because the issues were personal rather than substantive.

Nixon again suggested and urged at a California caucus--either he was possibly present or through some of his spokesmen (not myself however)--that in view of the results of the Georgia delegation vote, California's prestige and position would be better if California would take a "realistic," as it was termed, position. His position was that the convention was going to elect General Eisenhower and therefore, in view of the fact that the California delegation was favorable to Eisenhower as a second choice as against Taft, it should take that position.

Fry: On the first ballot?

Dinkelspiel: Yes. I'm certain that some of the alleged hard feeling between Warren and Nixon resulted from the story that I have told you. Both on the train and subsequently in Chicago the Warren people, at least, felt that Nixon was undercutting Earl Warren's chances of possible success. Although in defense of Nixon, Nixon expressed many times--and I can only quote what his expressions were that he did this to be realistic. In his opinion, an opinion confirmed by what the convention had done in the so-called "Georgia vote," the only realistic position to insure that Eisenhower, rather than Taft, would be the candidate was to support Eisenhower. By supporting him I mean agreeing to announce in advance at least that on the second ballot California would vote for Eisenhower if there was a deadlock, although Nixon felt that

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*"Official report of the proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Republican National Convention, July 7-11, 1952," Washington D.C.: Judd and Dudweiler, Inc.

Dinkelspiel: it would be better yet if California would cast its seventy votes forthwith for Eisenhower, which would practically assure Eisenhower of a victory on the first ballot.

Senator Knowland, as chairman of the delegation, refused to take this position. When the roll of the states was called California voted on the first ballot seventy votes for Earl Warren.

Fry: Was this in opposition to some of you on the delegation?

Dinkelspiel: No. No, I had no opposition to it, because after having talked to most of the delegates present, knowing most of them personally, in my opinion I felt that if Earl Warren did not succeed--well, let me correct myself. If there was a deadlock I felt without any question that if we maintained the unit rule, California would vote seventy votes on the second ballot or the third ballot or whatever ballot there would be, for Eisenhower rather than Taft. If we abandoned the so-called "unit rule," by which I mean you have to vote in bloc, a great majority of the California delegates would vote in favor of Eisenhower. You're asking my personal opinion. I was personally in favor of what Senator Knowland was doing because I saw no reason at that moment why California had to back away from its pledge.

Fry: What about the delegation's caucus before the convention voted on this so-called "fair-play amendment" for seating the contested delegations? The figures that I have seen on it indicate that [checks paper] only eight votes voted the way that would have seated the Taft delegates and therefore maybe helped preserve a deadlock.

Dinkelspiel: That's my recollection. I think that confirms exactly what I said to you: my recollection is that the great majority of the California delegates were favorable to Eisenhower as against Taft.

Fry: Who spoke to the delegation during the delegation seating dispute? We'd like to know what went on.

Dinkelspiel: I can't remember the names. We had a couple of caususes at which representatives supporting both views presented their case to us. But I just do not recall who they were. I can recall, however, several meetings on that subject. As I point out, it was most important to the ultimate result of the convention.

Fry: Was that when Nixon gave an eloquent plea to seat these pro-Eisenhower people?

Dinkelspiel: I cannot remember that. I just cannot.

Fry: What about Warren? Did he take a position? He was head of the delegation.

Dinkelspiel: I can't remember either Warren or Nixon, as such, taking a position on the "fair play amendment." I'm looking at page 184 of the official proceedings which you referred to a moment ago.* I see that the official tabulation indicates that California voted sixty-two "yes" and eight "no" in favor of the adoption of the minority report; that is, the report favorable to Eisenhower. I cannot recall at this time who spoke at the caucuses, but I would assume, in view of the overwhelming vote of the California delegation, that there was no real opposition to the adoption. It confirms my recollection that a great majority of the California delegates were favorable to Eisenhower as against Taft.

Fry: I think the Chicago Daily News came out with an item about this time that Richard Nixon was assured of the vice-presidency because he had given an eloquent plea in the caucus for the seating of these delegates by the California delegation.

Dinkelspiel: If that's so I know nothing of that. When I heard, after the nomination of Eisenhower, that General Eisenhower's choice was Nixon, it was as much a surprise to me as it was to anyone else. I had heard of absolutely no pre-convention agreement or anything of the sort between Nixon and Eisenhower.

Fry: What were your attitudes toward Eisenhower and Taft when you first went on the delegation. Were you pro one over the other?

Dinkelspiel: Yes. I was favorable to Eisenhower. It's kind of hard in 1975 to evaluate your political thinking of 1952, but Taft was painted as a very conservative Republican. Eisenhower was considered, for what the word may mean, a liberal. Also as a Republican--the Republicans had gone through many years of political starvation. We were of course anxious to see a Republican victory. It was my opinion, and shared in by many others, that Eisenhower was by far the most popular, by far the most electable and would have been, end-wise, the best choice.

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*Proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Republican Convention, 1952, p. 184.

Fry: So at some point, you changed from Taft to supporting Eisenhower?

Dinkelspiel: No, I never supported Taft. If I said that I didn't mean it at all. No, never.

Fry: Oh, I thought you said you supported Taft at the first. Eisenhower then, at the first?

Dinkelspiel: Yes, as against Taft, at all times.

Fry: Was Bill Knowland on the delegation as a Taft man?

Dinkelspiel: I couldn't say. Bill Knowland was a very hard man to find out what his thinking was--a very able, but very difficult man and not gregarious.

Fry: I think in this series of events around the seating of the Eisenhower delegations that Knowland suggested that the California delegation split its vote evenly for seating the Eisenhower and Taft delegations or something like that. Do you remember that?

Dinkelspiel: I have no recollection of that, no.

Fry: His thinking I suppose was that this would preserve the way the delegation was selected. But the vote didn't come out that way when they voted.

Dinkelspiel: No. I have no recollection of Knowland's making any such suggestion. I do remember--and as I say it's a matter now of twenty-three years so I'm amazed that I can remember anything--but I can remember very vividly the meetings in the Knickerbocker Hotel in reference to the Georgia delegation because that was the big excitement of the convention.

Fry: Do you remember when Eisenhower came over to meet with the California delegation?

Dinkelpsiel: Yes.

Fry: What did he say? What was the reaction of the delegation?

Dinkelspiel: The reaction was very favorable. You have to bear in mind that both he and Taft--particularly Eisenhower at that time was a great national hero. When they came they didn't come in on the basis of trying to woo you on logic. It was more or less a question of meeting and selling their personalities. The logic of attempting to get the votes by logic was done by their representatives rather than by themselves or their friends. When they came in it was more in the nature of a cocktail party, as it would be known today, than anything else.

Fry: Back on the train: you said that you thought that a majority on the train were pro-Eisenhower. I wondered if any thumbnail--

Dinkelspiel: Say, "pro-Eisenhower as against Taft." The majority, of course, were pro-Warren. I would say--well, obviously we were. We were all pledged to Earl Warren. If we hadn't been--I can't conceive of anybody being on the Warren delegation, and not having been for Earl Warren.

Fry: I just wondered if there were any informal surveys made of the delegation on the train.

Dinkelspiel: No, not that I recall. The only time that there was any real discussion was after Nixon boarded the train at Denver--if it was Denver, or wherever it was. I think it was Denver. Then that word got around. So then the delegates got concerned.

Fry: Do you think there was any connection between a backlash against Nixon's behavior and the exposure of the so-called "Nixon fund" later by some members of the California delegation?

Dinkelspiel: I don't follow your question.

Fry: Some writers have implied that the reason that the story of the Nixon fund (which Dana Smith was holding for Nixon's campaign expenses) was given to the press was that there were a number of disgruntled pro-Warren people after this sort of thing had happened on the train.

Dinkelspiel: Oh, I don't think so.

Fry: Do you think there was any--

Dinkelspiel: No, I think there was some fellow--he was a New York reporter--who had got hold of the story, wrote the story. No, I think that incident was blown up. I don't know by whom or how or for what reason. Most people would forget and today it is so de minimus that no one would pay any attention--only $16,000 involved. There was never any assertion of any kind that the $16,000 was being used improperly. The purpose of it was simply to assure that there would be some extra funds to carry on a campaign. Certainly there was no payoff or even intimation of payoff when you consider the amount of funds involved. I've never heard it ever suggested that this was a matter of vindictiveness by Warren. I couldn't believe it if that were so. I think this was just a newspaper scoop. In the year of 1952, $16,000 was sufficient to hit the front pages, whereas today you wouldn't look at it.

Fry: Pretty small potatoes, isn't it? [laughs]

Dinkelspiel: Pretty small potatoes.

Fry: Especially when you think of what happened in the last election [1972].

Dinkelspiel: [laughs] Yes.

Fry: There was a questionnaire that Nixon sent out early--I don't have a date on it, but it must have been March or April of 1952--to 23,000 California voters asking who they thought would be the strongest candidate, Eisenhower or Taft.

Dinkelspiel: I don't remember that.

Fry: You don't? You must not have been one of the receivers of that. This was also another point that rankled a lot of the Warren supporters.

Dinkelspiel: I wasn't aware of it. At least if I was aware of it I've forgotten about it. I don't remember that.

Fry: Do you know very much about the arrangement for Nixon to be vice-president? I have a note here that some people think Henry Cabot Lodge negotiated that. Do you know anything about negotiations of that sort?

Dinkelspiel: I know nothing about that at all. As I've mentioned to you, when the choice was announced--when I heard it the night after General Eisenhower received the nomination--I was very, very much surprised.

Fry: Did you think someone else might be vice-president?

Dinkelspiel: I hadn't any idea. We speculated that Earl Warren would certainly be more likely to be named than Richard Nixon. Bill Knowland said he wouldn't accept the position, as I recall. So I would not have been surprised at all had it been said that Earl Warren would be the nominee. He was a very logical person. He had been the nominee before, with Dewey. So I was completely stunned when I heard the news that Eisenhower had picked Nixon.

Fry: Did you think Warren would have accepted it?

Dinkelspiel: I have no idea.

Fry: What I'm really asking you is what the general opinion was then on whether Warren would have accepted it.

Dinkelspiel: I don't know. I couldn't answer that.

Fry: It's hard to remember all the rumors of things that didn't happen twenty-five years later. But sometimes that's as interesting as what actually did happen.

Bill Knowland's Role

Fry: I was also wondering if you had heard anything at the time about Knowland being offered the vice-presidency by Taft.

Dinkelspiel: I heard certain rumors of it, because Knowland had been reasonably close with Taft in the Senate. But I don't recall whether at that time Knowland was on the foreign affairs committtee or not or what committees they had been on together. But it's kind of hard to remember without going back to some reference. Yes, I always felt that Knowland was more sympathetic to Taft than he was to Eisenhower. But of course Knowland was loyal to Warren because his appointment to the Senate had come through Earl Warren and they both had been Alameda County products. There had been a kinship.

Fry: It was interesting to note that Mr. and Mrs. Joe Knowland and Joe Knowland, Jr. were also aboard the train, and I guess Bill Knowland's wife was aboard also.

Dinkelspiel: That's right. Helen.

Fry: So there was quite a Knowland "delegation" too.

Dinkelspiel: That I don't think had any significance as such because Knowland was the chairman of the California delegation, and at that time he and Governor Warren were the two big shots in the California Republican party which controlled almost every office in California. His father at that time was the active publisher of the Tribune. I don't remember the son being there, but Knowland was then happily married to Helen, and he would naturally take his wife with him.

Fry: I wondered if there was any overt talk at all by Knowlands--especially Bill Knowland but also any of the other Knowlands on the train--about a possibility of the delegation eventually supporting Taft.

Dinkelspiel: Not that I recall.

Fry: Was there any talk along that line later at the convention, before the vote?

Dinkelspiel: I don't think so. I think Knowland's position was, "Well, we're pledged to Earl Warren, and we'll stick to that and see what happens." Only after the vote was in, and I think recognizing that the great majority of the California delegates were favorable to Eisenhower as against Taft, did Knowland immediately get to his feet on the floor of the convention, (which is reported in the proceedings* at page 407) and move for the unanimous election of General Eisenhower.

Dinkelspiel: Yes, after the completion of the first ballot. After the completion of the first ballot, as appears on page 406 of the official proceedings,** Eisenhower received 845 votes, MacArthur 4 votes, Taft 280 votes, and Warren 77 votes, of which 70 were from California. So, Eisenhower was elected whether California did anything further, but Bill Knowland immediately stood up and then made this motion that it be unanimous.

Fry: He was the only and first one to do that?

Dinkelspiel: That is correct. Well no, let me just correct it. In looking through this book here, Senator John W. Bricker of Ohio, who was then as I recall the manager of the Taft campaign, was the first to move that the nomination be made unanimous.

Fry: Then the chair recognized Senator Knowland.

Dinkelspiel: Right. Senator Knowland.

Fry: Knowland says, "It gives me a great deal of pleasure to join Senator Bricker in the motion for the unanimous election of General Eisenhower."

Dinkelspiel: Right.

Fry: The question still comes up about whether Knowland could have beaten Minnesota in getting the recognition of the chair as the state to put Eisenhower over the top during the first ballot. What do you think about that?

Dinkelspiel: That's right. The way you stated it is quite correct.

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*Proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Republican Convention, 1952, p. 407.

**Ibid., p. 406.

Dinkelspiel: After the Georgia vote on the contested delegation and after it appeared certain that Eisenhower would win, a great number--I would almost feel possibly a majority--felt that California's prestige was such that Knowland, as the spokesman for the convention, should have at that time arisen and been recognized and said, "The California delegation changes its vote." I recall it had been expressed to Knowland whether by formal vote or otherwise, that our second choice was Eisenhower. So that created some kind of a critical feeling about what Knowland did after it was all over.

A Look at the Delegation

Fry: Let me ask you about these names of convention delegates. Are these a lot of the men that Nixon had chosen? [reading from paper] [Frank] Jorgensen, [Jack] Drown, [Pat] Hillings, [Joe] Holt, [Roy P.] Crocker.

Dinkelspiel: With reference to the names, Alan Pattee was a so-called Nixon appointee. Frank E. Jorgensen had been a very close friend of Richard Nixon's and was appointed by him. Jack Drown was, and I guess still is, a close personal friend of Nixon. Pat Hillings had been the congressman and was a close friend of Nixon. You indicate that Joe Holt was not on the delegate's list. I know Joe Holt; I knew him. He was a friend at that time of Nixon's. If Holt had been on the list and was a delegate, he would have been put there by Nixon. Ray Arbuthnot, A-r-b-u-t-h-n-o-t, was a very close friend of Nixon's. Ron Button, as I recall, was a friend of Earl Warren's. Ron had been the Republican state chairman at one time. He was what I would term a Warren man. I don't know if Ron is still alive or not.

Fry: Yes, he is. He's in Los Angeles.

Dinkelspiel: Is he? I haven't seen him for many years. Bramblett I don't know, nor do I recall Roy P. Crocker.

Fry: Who were Warren's biggest supporters, the really strong ones, the type of delegate who would not want much discussion of Eisenhower or Taft or any other?

Dinkelspiel: [pause] I'm looking at the list because I have to do that and go back. I would say that McIntyre Faries was one, as were Mrs. [Marjorie] Benedict, Truman or "Tony" DeLap as he was known, Laughlin E. Waters, Marvin Sherwin from Piedmont.

Fry: Is he still there?

Dinkelspiel: I have no idea. Jesse Steinhart, now dead. Thomas J. Mellon. Some person from Eureka was really a--what's his name? [looks through papers]

Fry: Would he be in this top list right here?

Dinkelspiel: Yes, but I could possibly find it easier here. [V.A.] Caracappa, C-a-r-a-c-a-p-p-a--he was an alternate. As I remember he was a very enthusiastic Warren supporter. He provided all the delegates with blue and gold sweaters to wear on arrival in Chicago--

Fry: Oh, my goodness!

Dinkelspiel: --all kinds of Warren paraphernalia and forms and balloons.

Fry: Oh, that's what we need for our University of California library exhibit on the Warren Era. [laughs]

Dinkelspiel: I was hoping I would have something like that. [laughs]

Fry: It's amazing how those campaign items have just evaporated.

The only other question I have to ask you is what did you do in 1950? You said you entered politics in 1950.

Dinkelspiel: I had been in the senatorial campaign of Richard Nixon. I was his Northern California manager.

Fry: Oh, you were?

Dinkelspiel: Yes.

Fry: Oh, marvelous. Then you know--

Dinkelspiel: Well, I don't know anymore. [laughs]

Fry: I've been trying to design a series of interviews on the Nixon side of that campaign. We talked to Helen Douglas, and we need the other side presented. So maybe I'll be back. I don't want to take your time now.

Dinkelspiel: You're more than welcome to come back. There are two people that could be helpful on that besides myself and that's Harvey Hancock who handled the public relations. He was what they call in politics "the pro." I was "the amateur." Harvey lives in Carmel.

Fry: Oh, that would be very fine.

Dinkelspiel: If you would like to get back together.

Fry: Yes, I would. We could talk about who worked on the 1950 campaign and so forth.

Dinkelspiel: As a matter of fact last night I was looking through--I do have some documents or newspapers that you probably have yourself that go back to that kind of thing.

Fry: We like to have clippings because they're so handy to put in research files. It saves a lot of time for us.

Dinkelspiel: Of course it does.

Fry: So that would be very nice.

Dinkelspiel: You give me a buzz at your convenience, and I'll be happy to get what I can for you. I think these things are very good, and if you see [The Bancroft Library Director, James D.] Jim Hart you tell him "hello" for me, won't you please?

Fry: I certainly will.

II NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAIRMAN FOR NIXON, 1950 SENATE RACE

[Interview 2: March 24, 1975]
[begin tape 2, side 1]

Post-Primary Strategy Session at San Ysidro Ranch

Fry: Today is the twenty-fifth anniversary of the day that Nixon filed in the senatorial campaign. [laughs] We really didn't schedule the interview to coincide with that date.

Dinkelspiel: That I haven't got down in my anniversary book.

Fry: His public announcement came earlier, though, as you remember, on November 4, 1949. The day before that he had called for a special commission to be formed to follow up Senator Joseph McCarthy's charges with an investigation of the State Department.

Dinkelspiel: I don't recall that. [gets up to search for material]

Fry: I wondered at what point you began work in the campaign.

Dinkelspiel: My first contact or interest in the Nixon prospective campaign was started around November, 1949. So, I wouldn't have any knowledge of what you're telling me now.

Fry: That must have been shortly after he announced. I have one thing here that you might like to see which I picked up in Southern California. Roy Day gave me a copy of this. That's Nixon's November 1, 1949 letter that he sent out to tell some of his closest associates of his decision to run.

Dinkelspiel: Yes, it's about the time. I didn't know Nixon before that at all. Go ahead. I'm just getting myself oriented.

Fry: One of the things that happened early in the campaign was a meeting at the San Ysidro ranch in Montecito. Do you know about that? Did you attend it?

Dinkelspiel: Yes. [pause] I'm trying to--that was later. The meeting I attended at San Ysidro, if my memory bears me correct, was after the organization was beginning to take roots and the meeting was to discuss campaign strategy. There may have been a meeting there prior to that time, but I don't have any recollection of it.

Fry: I don't know when the meeting was, but according to Roy Crocker it lasted for most of three days.

Dinkelspiel: I believe it was two or three days.

[phone interruption]

Fry: Back to the San Ysidro meeting. What do you remember about it? Can you tell me what was discussed? What alternatives were considered for campaign tactics?

Dinkelspiel: The time, I'm quite satisfied, was after November, 1949, probably after whatever the time was that Nixon announced formally that he would run [November 4, 1949]. The purpose of the meeting was to get the people from Northern California, Central California, and Southern California to meet each other and to more or less determine who was going to do what with reference to the campaign that was coming up.

Fry: Who was handling that meeting?

Dinkelspiel: The two dominant people were Murray Chotiner and Bernie Brennan, who was an attorney in Los Angeles. He became the Southern California campaign chairman and apparently had been a good friend of Nixon's.

Fry: At that meeting did they discuss any issues to bring out in the campaign? Or did they discuss tactics?

Dinkelspiel: No, there were no tactics. I think the main thing was the methods and allocation of the funds between Northern and Southern California, how those funds should be used.

I'm going to correct myself because, as I now recall this meeting I attended, it was after Nixon had received the Republican nomination or was running in the primary. During the campaign itself or [pause]--

Fry: Or maybe after the primary?

Dinkelspiel: It was after the primary. I'm sure of that. Yes.

Fry: And for the general election?

Dinkelspiel: Yes.

Fry: Was there shuffling of funds back and forth between the north and the south?

Dinkelspiel: I wouldn't say there was shuffling of the funds. I think we were pretty well autonomous in the handling of our own finances. We may have had to get some funds (supplemental to ours) from Southern California, who were then and have since been the rich uncle [laughs].

Fry: I talked to Asa Call and a few other people in Los Angeles there around Sixth Street and Grand Avenue.

Dinkelspiel: Yes.

Fry: Is that where the primary source of funds was from?

Dinkelspiel: I wouldn't know where the funds were from in Southern California. I know Asa Call was one of the contributors, but I couldn't tell you, at this time, who the principal people were who gave money in 1949. I just don't know. I can say this. The funds that were used in that campaign, as compared to the funds used today in any campaign, were so negligible in amount that you're not talking about the same kind of ammunition.

Fry: Right. You had a totally different kind of campaign. I couldn't find any television expenses listed in those state reports.

Dinkelspiel: I don't recall that we had any.

Fry: There was a lot of radio.

Dinkelspiel: A great deal of radio. They used to use what they call throwaways (handouts) and billboards, quarter sizes and half sizes, which have been superseded now to a large extent by television expense. There was considerable newspaper advertising.

"Northern California Citizens for Nixon" is Formed

Dinkelspiel: Now the first time that I got involved with the Nixon-for-Senator campaign was about November 1, 1949.

Fry: How did he happen to get in touch with you?

Dinkelspiel: It's rather interesting. I had just come back from the service. I'd spent four years in the navy. I had served, during the last part of the service, as the flag secretary to Admiral John H. Hoover, who was "Commander Forward Area." In the course of my service I met and got to know, not intimately but professionally, Harold Stassen, who was the flag secretary to Admiral [Raymond Ames] Spruance.

I guess, like all young warriors, you have dreams of a better country when you return. I was no exception, although I had never had any political experience before that time. When I came back and retired from the navy--I got out in 1945--the 1948 campaign was about to develop. At that time, if you recall, Harold Stassen was a young ex-serviceman with quite a distinguished record. He had been the governor of Minnesota and was approximately my then-youthful age. I thought he would be a rather likely person, although I personally did nothing in connection with the campaign because at that time, in 1948, Earl Warren was running.

As far as I am concerned, I always have been a great admirer of, and supporter of, Earl Warren. However, a small group of my friends had met at luncheon and they felt that if by any chance the Republican nomination should go to Stassen, they would like to do what they could to support him. I said I would only be interested in the event that Stassen became the Republican presidential candidate. History was that he did not become the candidate. However, through that I had met a nucleus of men of my own age and thinking. In 1949, I received--

Fry: [interrupting] I'm sorry. Could you tell us who this nucleus was?

Dinkelspiel: I'll get to it in a moment, because I think it would follow better later in the narrative.

In 1949 I received a call from an attorney whom I then knew--I haven't seen him now for many years and whether he's alive or not I don't know--named David Saunders, S-a-u-n-d-e-r-s, of Los Angeles. Dave Saunders had been very active in this

Dinkelspiel: so-called Stassen group. He had been up to San Francisco, and he was the one who had more or less put together these small luncheons. When I say luncheons--they were small meetings. I don't think at any time they ever exceeded over twelve or fifteen maximum.

In November of 1949 I received a call from Dave Saunders. He said that he had met and was very excited about a young congressman from Southern California, who he felt would be a fine candidate to run for the United States Senate. This candidate was the congressman from Whittier. He was well regarded in that area. Nixon was a sort of national figure because of the Hiss case hearings in his congressional committee. He had been a war veteran, having served in the navy, which at that time to we people who had been in the service, was an important factor, etc. Saunders asked me if I would be interested and if I would meet Nixon. I said, "Well of course I would, if he was everything that you describe."

There was some Republican meeting being scheduled about that time at the Palace Hotel in San Francisco. Saunders phoned me to say that Nixon was in San Francisco at that meeting and could I meet with them. So I went to the Palace Hotel and met Nixon, chatted with him for a few moments, came away quite impressed with his personality.

A short time after that I received another call from Saunders to ask if I could get together a group (more or less the same group that had met some years before in reference to Harold Stassen) and meet with Congressman Nixon to see whether they would be interested in sponsoring a Northern California group. I said, "Yes, I would happy to do that."

And I may say, at that time Nixon was almost an "unknown" in Northern California. But I called up a group and asked them if they would come to my office, which was then at 333 Montgomery Street, on such and such a day, the date of which I can't recall. It was at or about that time. I phoned Saunders and told him that I had made this appointment tentative on Mr. Nixon coming to San Francisco and meeting with the group. So, Saunders advised me that that was satisfactory. Nixon arrived and we had the meeting.

I am looking at some old records that I have here, which may be of some use. The meeting was held on December 14, 1949. Let me see something here. [pause as Dinkelspiel rechecks papers] No, the meeting was apparently sometime in October, 1949--I say my dates are rather hazy--because I have here a letter that I wrote to Dave Saunders on the date of November

Dinkelspiel: 2, 1949. In it I advised him that it had been impossible to write him sooner but that, "as you have no doubt heard from Congressman Nixon, our group met with him last week, and after rather extensive discussion determined upon associating ourselves as the 'Northern California Citizens for Nixon.' Mr. Nixon suggested we find out, if we could, whether there would be any newspaper acceptance of him in this part of the state." This was because at that time, as far as we believed and as far as he knew, he was an unknown person politically.

We prepared a press release giving the usual information that one would give if one were supporting a candidate. I called up Paul Smith, who was then the editor of the [San Francisco] Chronicle, whom I knew, and told him of the meeting and that I was sending over this press release to him. The archives of the Chronicle will undoubtedly show you the press release, which was about three inches long and one inch wide and was rather disappointing. We had of course expected to have front page headlines and got very little publicity. But at any rate, the press release announced the formation of a Northern California committee. [pause as Dinkelspiel looks through papers] I hope by talking as I am I'm not mixing this up. But you have to bear in mind that this goes back almost twenty-five years and it's difficult to remember. I'm looking back here.

I have a copy of a letter that I wrote to the Honorable Richard Nixon, Whittier, on the date of November 2, 1949. I wrote at that time,

> Dear Mr. Nixon:
>
> I was indeed sorry to miss you both at my office and at home, having arrived at the latter place only a few moments after you had called. The Northern California group, as you are aware, formally announced its organization and received favorable newspaper publicity. In line with our discussion we hope to be of further service to you in whatever way you or Mr. Brennan may determine best. I understand you and Mr. Brennan [Aside to Fry: Mr. Brennan being Bernard Brennan that I referred to before] will return to San Francisco shortly. I should like very much to have a few moments discussion with you as to the details. We have particularly in mind arranging some form of reception for you to enable you to meet the persons who may be helpful to your cause. If you have any suggestions please let us know..." and so forth.

Dinkelspiel: So, that sort of fixes when the time of the meeting was. Then I wrote again to David Saunders, whom I mentioned previously, and sent him the newspaper clipping which I referred to, which I do not have a copy of. Now this was done, apparently, prior to the time of Mr. Nixon's announcement of his candidacy. In my letter (the second paragraph) I say,

> The enclosed newspaper clipping will give you some idea of the publicity which has been given in this part of the state to the movement, and which of course is in line with the thoughts conveyed by you to us when we met recently at the Palace Hotel. Meanwhile we are biding time until the formal announcement of Mr. Nixon's candidacy is made.

Fry: That letter is November 2, 1949?

Dinkelspiel: November 2, yes.

Fry: And I think his formal announcement came in the November 4, 1949 San Francisco Examiner.

Dinkelspiel: Yes, you can see that the timing is approximate, but it's about that time. Because of my friendship with David Saunders, arising by the circuitous route of having met Harold Stassen in the Mariana Islands and elsewhere, I was the one that Dave Saunders asked to call the meeting.

So I called the meeting and somebody said, "We ought to have a committee."

Somebody present said, "Well, the meeting is in your office. We have to have a chairman. I guess on all committees you should have a chairman, a vice-chairman, a secretary, and a treasurer," although we had nothing to treasure at the time.

So someone said, "Inasmuch as the meeting is in your office, would you be the chairman?"

And that's how I became the Northern California chairman, as it developed.

Fry: Who was David Saunders? That name is new to me.

Dinkelspiel: He was the head of what they called the Young Republican Volunteers or some such name. He was a youngish lawyer in Los Angeles and had been very active or sympathetic to Harold Stassen.

[phone interruption]

Dinkelspiel: So through his interest in Harold Stassen prior to 1948, David Saunders had called me. I guess maybe Stassen had given him my name because of my meeting him in the war. I presume that he called me again in the fifties because of the fact that he had called me some years before and I had evinced some interest in politics.

Fry: Were the other men in this initial committee also people that had been interested in Stassen earlier?

Dinkelspiel: They may or may not have been. They were men that I knew in San Francisco from my profession. A number of them I knew from the days when I was a director and active in the San Francisco Junior Chamber of Commerce. The men that were there at the meeting were: Mr. John Marshall; Joseph A. Moore, Jr., who is now a regent of the university; Edward Turkington; Mortimer Fleishhacker, Jr.; Francis B. Hutchins, who is now retired (he was an attorney in San Francisco); Aylett B. Cotton, who was an attorney in San Francisco (his father was a judge for many years in San Mateo County); Dwight Merriman, (during the period I served as the director and was active in the Junior Chamber of Commerce; he's since deceased; he was a very well-known real estate person in San Francisco); Leland Kaiser, who ran subsequently for U.S. Senator; Phelps Hunter; David Smith; Frank Belcher; Arthur Dolan; John Wiley; Howard Ahmanson; Carl Miller; and Milton Essberg.

Fry: Did you say none of these had any political experience?

Dinkelspiel: Yes. None of them had ever run for any political office. They were just men in the community I considered of very fine standing.

Fry: That's interesting because Earl Warren's campaigns also were frequently made up of people that would not necessarily have any political experience.

Dinkelspiel: That's right. I know it.

Fry: What was your next step?

Dinkelspiel: The next step was to wait till Mr. Nixon was to formally announce that he was going to be a candidate. In the meantime we did enlarge our group. We asked everybody to get a few more names and there were a number--but the committee itself was rather a straw committee. We didn't do very much because we couldn't until such time as Nixon announced his candidacy. I don't recall when he did announce. Do you have the date?

Fry: Yes, the formal announcement came November 4, 1949.

Dinkelspiel: So it was at or about this time. We then set up the committee. Nixon had only one person of any potency who indicated he was going to run in the primaries against him.

Fry: Raymond Darby?

Dinkelspiel: No, it was Houser.

Fry: Oh, Judge Frederick Houser.

Dinkelspiel: Judge Frederick Houser, not to be confused with the--

Fry: Attorney general. This was the ex-lieutenant governor.

Dinkelspiel: Frederick Houser from Los Angeles. He had announced that he was going to run for the U.S. Senate.

So the question was to develop what we were to do in the primary. We set up and enlarged our committee, the Northern California committee. We then started to try to get funds necessary for the approaching primary. We had some considerable difficulty because of the fact that Nixon was an unknown person, but we were able to get enough to stumble by.

Fry: How did you manage that? Did you appoint a finance committee or did each of you take some responsibility?

Dinkelspiel: No, we had a finance committee. I can't recall whether Leland Kaiser was the chairman or someone else. I would hate to say at this time just who was the head of it. I think it was Robert Hornby if I'm not mistaken, H-o-r-n-b-y, who became the president of Pacific Light Company. I may be mistaken, but I think one of those was finance chairman. Additionally, we individually sought funds from available sources. We weren't talking in any great, extreme amounts.

[End Tape 2, Side 1; Begin Tape 3, Side 1]

Harvey Hancock Comes to the Campaign

Dinkelspiel: Besides trying to get some funds together to carry this thing through, our committee decided the next step that would be required was to engage a campaign manager, someone with some public relations know-how. Of the group that we had, only one of the men was in the advertising business. But beyond that nobody knew anything. Oh, I won't say anything, but nobody had had any experience in public relations.

Dinkelspiel: So, I checked about and the name of Harvey Hancock was given to me as a very able fellow. He had done a good deal of public relations work for Pan American Airlines. He was very well known throughout the state, which later proved to be absolutely correct. He had retired or was about to retire from his position with Pan Am. Whoever told me about him thought that he might be a very likely person and very much interested. I checked up and found out that Harvey was then in South America. I sent him a cable and asked him if he would be interested and when was he coming home. He cabled me back that he would be back at such and such a time.

He did come back. He came in to see me. I interviewed him and then called the committee together and made the necessary arrangements to engage him as the campaign director to handle the so-called public relations and the day-by-day running of the campaign. I was still not able to give up my time completely, as I was a practicing lawyer. So, the actual running of the campaign was turned over to Harvey.

Fry: What did that include?

Dinkelspiel: That included the preparations, the purchasing of and placing of billboards, getting radio spots, getting newspaper ads and doing whatever would have to be done to run a political campaign.

Fry: What about scheduling meetings?

Dinkelspiel: Hancock would arrange the schedules subject to our okay. He would coordinate these meetings with Murray Chotiner, who was doing the same work in Southern California but was more or less the overall planner of the campaign.

Fry: Did Harvey report to Murray Chotiner?

Dinkelspiel: Well, he was in touch with Chotiner. Hancock would report to me what he was proposing to do. I met Chotiner a number of times during the campaign, but I had no direct association with him in any way. We had engaged Harvey Hancock.

As I started to say, I have a letter here from Richard Nixon on the letterhead of the Congress of the United States, Twelfth Congressional District, January 9, 1950. I must have written him about a conversation I had with Paul Smith, who was the editor of the San Francisco Chronicle. Paul Smith was only reasonably enthusiastic in his support, more or less because of the fact that Nixon was an unknown. I had suggested under the circumstances that we let nature take its course and not press Smith. In his letter here to me Nixon concurs that that was good thinking.

Fry: I noticed that there were some nice, relatively large donations to the Nixon campaign from the publisher of the Chronicle, so you must have been pretty successful.

Dinkelspiel: Well, if I was I don't remember it. But I'm glad to hear that I was.

Fry: I hate to give you this great big thing right now--*

Dinkelspiel: All right; well, don't bother.

Fry: It's very thick. I went through it and I just checked those that were over $500. I think the biggest were $1,000. There were a couple contributions from [George Toland] Cameron, [publisher of San Francisco Chronicle].

Dinkelspiel: That may well be.

Fry: There was one very early in the campaign and then one later on.

Dinkelspiel: This is just a guess, but I would doubt that those large contributions came prior to the time of this letter, because at that time we were still having some difficulty getting the full, unadulterated support of the Chronicle. Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe Paul Smith was autonomous in his endorsement of candidates. I don't know.

Fry: This contribution was to the United Republican Finance Committee of Northern California, so it wasn't directly to Nixon himself. But it was $1,000, yes, after the primary and early in the general election campaign, in August.

Dinkelspiel: Yes, I would have been sure of that.

Fry: So, at any rate, he was pitching in for the general election.

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*The report referred to here is a statement of receipts and expenditures of the United Republican Finance Committee of California (Northern California Division), including a similar statement from its Nixon for United States Senator Sub-Committee. The report, dated November 21, 1950, was received by Secretary of State Charles J. Hagerty. California State Archives.

Dinkelspiel: Eventually the San Francisco Examiner, the Chronicle, and the Oakland Tribune supported Nixon. The only local paper that was against Nixon, but was pro-Democratic at the time, was the Scripps-Howard paper, the San Francisco News, which was then in existence.

At any rate, I mentioned that I'd had several conversations with Paul Smith and hadn't gotten his full support. In this January 9, 1950 letter from Nixon he says,

> I hope that it will be possible for us to get together during my trip to California on the weekend of February 12. Even though no formal meeting will be scheduled for the San Francisco area, I wonder if you might think it advisable to arrange a meeting of the campaign committee for the [San Francisco] Bay Area at that time. If so I think we would be able to work it into my schedule. I am sending copies of this letter to Murray Chotiner and Bernie Brennan and will follow any suggestions which you might work out with them.

Then Nixon goes on to discuss the advisability of setting up organizations in the valley towns, Sacramento Valley and San Joaquin Valley, and to consider the employment of a public relations man for that area to supplement the work that Hancock was doing from San Francisco and that Brennan was doing from Los Angeles.

You asked me a moment ago what Hancock did. After we got going and decided we would go on--and I can't tell you when this was done--part of what we were doing was to set up county committees, city committees. For instance, there was a Nixon-for-Senator committee in Alameda County, probably one in Oakland and Berkeley and the main cities, and one up in Mendocino County and so forth. Hancock would go around and set these committees up.

Fry: Did you go ahead and have a public relations man for the valley towns?

Dinkelspiel: I don't remember. I see in here the mention of a name, but I don't want to mention it because I just haven't any recollection anymore. I think we had a PR man, but I can't remember who it was.

Fry: (We probably won't finish this interview today.) I can show you the list of campaign expenses, and his name will probably be on it where his salary appears.

Dinkelspiel: It's very interesting as I look through my book here. We had a budget from Harvey Hancock and Company to me for the Northern California campaign. It's interesting when I think of what the 1972 committee for president spent and what our budget was. The budget was $34,050.

Fry: For the whole campaign or per month?

Dinkelspiel: No, the whole campaign. [reading from book] "Estimated cost of primary campaign."

Fry: According to the reports in the state archives, you went about $10,000 over that. So, you held to it pretty well.

Dinkelspiel: That's right.

Fry: You got the money for the campaign too. Does this budget cover just Northern California?

Dinkelspiel: Yes, this was Northern California. [reading from book] "To Richard Nixon at Northern California headquarters."

Fry: I think that report is for the whole state campaign.

Dinkelspiel: I don't know whether we spent it.

Fry: It looked like a lot of the expenses were billboards. They must have been one of your more expensive items.

Dinkelspiel: I can't tell you what these references are, but I have a letter here to Murray Chotiner from myself on February 21, 1950. "Dear Mr. Chotiner, I have your letter of February 16, suggesting certain billboard slogans. You asked for my opinion, so I will give you my frank reaction. I think 'New Leadership for America's Future' is excellent. [with emphasis] I do not care for the others. Sincerely,"

What the others were I don't know. Chotiner would submit to me for my opinion some of the political material, which he was originating for the most part. We would generate maybe one or two localized items from our office. But the Southern California headquarters would send material to us and we could use it or not. In many instances, as you gather from this letter, we did not use it. We did not agree with what Mr. Chotiner had planned.

The California Republican Assembly Endorses Nixon

Dinkelspiel: As I mentioned before, the principal opponent against Nixon in the primary was Frederick Houser. The incumbent Senator was [Democrat] Sheridan Downey, who first announced that he was running for re-election. Then around March, 1950, for reasons which I don't know, Sheridan Downey decided he was not going to run and he withdrew from the race, at which time Helen Gahagan Douglas and then Manchester Boddy, B-o-d-d-y, a Southern California publisher, announced they were going to vie for the Democratic nomination.

As far as we were concerned we thought that was very helpful, because the incumbent is always difficult to defeat. Sheridan Downey had had a pretty good record as a senator, so it would have been a harder campaign, although we anticipated that even against a non-incumbent the campaign would be difficult, assuming Nixon would get the nomination.

Sometime in the spring of 1950 there was a CRA [California Republican Assembly] meeting set at the Del Monte Lodge in Pebble Beach. The CRA at that time was a very influential organization. I went down there for the purpose of assisting and doing what I could to get the group to endorse Nixon rather than Houser.

Fry: Yes. That was such an important goal.

Dinkelspiel: There was rather an interesting side bit to this. Nixon had planned to attend the meeting, and something came up in the House of Representatives which made it impossible for him to get away. That, of course, was very disappointing to us because Fred Houser was there in person. Fred Houser was not a very articulate speaker, whereas Nixon was always a very effective speaker. We felt that his presence would be helpful to his cause.

But I got a phone call from someone in Washington--whom I can't remember, probably Nixon's administrative assistant--advising me that he couldn't get away, but that he had a speech prepared and he was going to have it taped. That was the first time I had ever experienced a tape recorder. It's rather ludicrous that the first tape I heard should have been one which Mr. Nixon [laughing]--

Fry: A harbinger of things to come [laughing].

Dinkelspiel: At any rate we went down to the meeting. They had the endorsement before a committee. I don't know the exact numbers, but the CRA committee voted in favor of Houser if I recall correctly.

Fry: Can I show you my notes on that?

Dinkelspiel: Yes.

Fry: I'm not sure where I got this. I may have gotten it from a book instead of from some primary source, but apparently the CRA subcommittee for selection chose Houser six to three.

Dinkelspiel: That's correct; that's right.

Fry: Then in the full committee Nixon squeaked by by one vote.

Dinkelspiel: That is right.

Fry: Something like twelve to thirteen. Is that right?

Dinkelspiel: That is right. It was very close. We played the tape to the full committee. The tape was very effective. He won by one vote. That's what I was trying to say, yes.

Fry: You don't think that tape still exists, do you?

Dinkelspiel: [laughing] Well, I'm sure not.

Fry: It'd be quite an archival prize.

Dinkelspiel: Yes, it would be. No, I don't have any idea where it could be.

Fry: Could you put in perspective for us just how important it was to have the CRA endorsement at that time?

Dinkelspiel: It was very important.

Fry: The CRA was outside the main Republican party.

Dinkelspiel: Well, it was important for us to get any and <u>all good</u> endorsements, because we had an unknown candidate who was seeking the backing of as many people as he could. I guess in numbers the CRA endorsement was not important, but prestige-wise it was.

Fry: How it is important is something I can't quite get defined. I don't know whether it was important because they were a good source of finances, or whether it was made up of men who were prestigious and could lend good names to the campaign.

Dinkelspiel: I would say the latter. It's the same as when any candidate in any campaign seeks the endorsement of a labor union, of this union, or of that organization. The endorsement per se is not too important. The endorsement is indicative of general support, of popularity. I don't think, as I got into the political arena later on, that the support or non-support of these organizations is necessarily the kiss of victory or the kiss of death. But the CRA was probably the most prestigious non-official Republican convention. It always more or less represented middle-of-the-road Republicanism, and therefore it had some stature. We were anxious to get its support. I guess we would have gone ahead with the campaign without it, but this was helpful.

Fry: Since I've interrupted you already I want to back up and ask you another question. Were you unhappy with Senator Sheridan Downey's record? Or why did you personally want to see a different senator elected? What were your personal reasons?

Dinkelspiel: Well, I've always been a Republican.

Fry: Your reasons were primarily party--?

Dinkelspiel: Primarily party--it wasn't too far after the New Deal. I wasn't in favor of that political philosophy then, and I haven't changed very much since. No, I would say that as far as the man was concerned Sheridan Downey did espouse his cause, but I didn't believe in his cause. That was about my interest in it.

Fry: So, you won the CRA endorsement. Did CRA work for Nixon in the campaign or did they not have a working organization?

Dinkelspiel: I don't recall. I doubt if they did. I don't think so. They may have worked for Nixon by giving volunteers and working in the general campaign. I just wouldn't know what they would do. They probably got their members to go out, the younger members to hand out badges or whatever.

Fry: Do you remember how Downey was kind of off again-on again about not running?

Dinkelspiel: Vaguely, yes. I never did know why he didn't run. I think it was his health, but I can't recall. [pause]

Dinkelspiel: Yes, here I wrote a letter to Nixon on March 1. "Dear Dick, We are still trying to figure out what it's all about, namely the indication that Downey will not run for re-election and Judge Houser's statements as per newspaper clipping." So apparently, Downey was on and off. But again, that's twenty-five years ago.

From that time on we tried to get as many endorsements as we could and to enlarge our committees throughout the state. I can't give you any more details on this. Maybe if you have an opportunity, on a nice weekend you might go down to Carmel and talk to Harvey Hancock, who lives there. He set up the committee meetings.

I do have here a letter in which I advise Nixon that, "I attended the San Francisco County Republican committee Saturday night on your behalf, and as you no doubt have heard obtained its endorsement."

There is a value in politics in getting the endorsement of an official organization if you can get it.

Fry: That letter was dated April 3?

Dinkelspiel: Yes, that was April 3, 1950.

Fry: Isn't a party endorsement unusual in a primary?

Dinkelspiel: I guess it is, but-- [laughter]

Fry: How did you get that endorsement?

Dinkelspiel: I guess I was a good manager.

Fry: [laughing] Now, come on. You must have known somebody on the committee.

Dinkelspiel: [chuckling] I just don't know. I just happen to have this letter here from that time.

Campaigning in Northern California

Dinkelspiel: You ask about whether our people were tried and true politicians. I have a letter here from Peter Howard, of Oakland. His family owned the Howard Terminals as it was then called. They were very well known citizens of Alameda County. Howard says, "Thank you for your letter of March 17, regarding my chairmanship

Dinkelspiel: of Alameda County for the Richard Nixon campaign. I trust you realize that I am a high-grade neophyte as to political campaigns and I so warned those who first asked me to serve. Nevertheless, I am most interested in promoting Mr. Nixon's cause and I will lend every effort possible, etc." So that bears out pretty well what I'm saying, that none of them had any real political experience.

Then we went ahead and we set up different committees, clubs. I have no way of knowing at this time where they were. I see here's a roster of the East Bay Nixon club, because I apparently kept for some reason the correspondence from Mr. Howard.

Fry: We can put some of that in the appendix.

Dinkelspiel: For instance, here I have a typical Alameda County itinerary: Richard M. Nixon, Friday, May 26, 1950. That's the accepted format of any political campaign. [quoting the itinerary]

You arrive at Irvington.

Program: Visit newspaper offices. No speeches planned. Claremont Hotel, check in.

12 noon to 1:30: City Commons Club, Berkeley Women's Club--luncheon and forty minute speech. Probably be asked for answer to questions for twenty or thirty minutes. Speech will be recorded for later evening broadcast over KRE. [tape off]

Tour industrial plants, casual handshaking. Tours without speeches.

The name of the person who was going to be the chairman of each of these events is also listed.

Fry: Did you go with Nixon when he was touring?

Dinkelspiel: No, only on a few occasions.

Fry: It was mostly Harvey Hancock who would see that he got around?

Dinkelspiel: Harvey Hancock would do that when he came into the area. He would go out. If it would appear to me to be important enough or if he wanted my presence then I would go. I was an emcee [master of ceremonies] at a number of large meetings. But when they would go over to Emeryville and go around casually handshaking, there was no purpose, for instance, in my going along. Whether or not I was with them in Alameda County on that day I just don't know.

Fry: I just meant in general.

Dinkelspiel: Here is a list of the candidates in that campaign. I don't know if it's of any interest or not. [shuffling papers]

This is the so-called scurrilous document where they link Douglas and Marcantonio--I don't know if you have that one--which we did not put out here.

Fry: It's pink and white on the inside. I don't think that's the famous "Pink Sheet." I think that's another one.

Dinkelspiel: Yes well, that may be.

Fry: Let me just read it. It says, "How would you have voted? Check this record. Congressman Nixon versus two left-wingers." Oh, so I see. Versus two left-wingers. Would that be Douglas and Marcantonio?

Dinkelspiel: Yes.

Fry: Was that Chotiner's--

Dinkelspiel: Yes, they got up all that stuff in Southern California. I think actually the one who really started it was Manchester Boddy in the Democratic primary.

Fry: I wondered about that.

Dinkelspiel: Yes, actually my recollection is that that germ was born in Boddy's campaign. But that I can't recall for sure.

Fry: Well, Boddy entered the campaign after Nixon did, and Nixon entered it with strong statements about the Communist menace.

Dinkelspiel: Yes.

Fry: But, of course, at the time Nixon entered Helen Gahagan Douglas had decided to run, but you didn't know that Downey was going to run too.

Dinkelspiel: I don't know whether she had decided to run or not. My best recollection at this late date is that she had not. I think that she only ran when it became apparent that Downey was not going to run. That was my best recollection, but I may be wrong on that.

Fry: She was not a serious contender as long as Downey was in?

Dinkelspiel: That's right.

I've got a piece of stationery here which says, "Congressman Richard Nixon for United States, Northern California Campaign Committee," which shows myself as chairman and Dwight L. Merriman, co-chairman. He had been the president at one time of the Junior Chamber of Commerce.

[end tape 2, side 2; begin tape 3, side 1]

Dinkelspiel: Oh, I wish I'd kept some more of this. [showing scrapbook]

Fry: How far does your scrapbook go?

Dinkelspiel: This is just about all I've got on the senatorial race.

Fry: But what you do have is really valuable.

Dinkelspiel: Yes, that material is interesting. But that's about all that I have in there of any interest. I had some clippings of some of Helen Gahagan Douglas's literature in there.

Fry: I was able to visit her papers at the University of Oklahoma and I got some xeroxes of her campaign material and some of Nixon's too. Then Roy Day gave me some more of Nixon's. So we're gradually getting a little archive together.

Dinkelspiel: A. Brooks Berlin would be helpful for her campaign. Have you talked with him?

Fry: No.

Dinkelspiel: He's in San Francisco.

Fry: Who was he?

Dinkelspiel: He was her local campaign manager.

Fry: Oh, I see. Well, I have a few more questions here on relationships in the organization. Was the Northern California section of the United Republican Finance Committee something you could always depend on for funds when you ran low? How did it function? The reason I ask is that in the state reports the committee gave quite a bit to Nixon and quite a bit to [Ed] Shattuck. I noticed they didn't give anything to Earl Warren's gubernatorial campaign except when something came in that was specifically earmarked.

Dinkelspiel: Warren ran his own campaign always.

Fry: He never was a part of the Republican party?

Dinkelspiel: No, no.

Fry: So that makes sense; but I wondered how you jockeyed for funds from that organization, because you were competing with other candidates.

Dinkelspiel: Well, you jockeyed.

Fry: [laughter] You jockeyed?

Dinkelspiel: You pled and you made a showing. You would go to them and say, "Well, look. We need the funds. Warren has financed himself. He's well financed. We are financing our campaign through the United Republican Finance Committee," which is the way ordinarily it would operate, with the exception of a man as anomalous as Earl Warren or as popular as he was that he could afford the luxury of running his own campaign. Therefore, you would go to them and convince them if you could that it was more important to have a Republican United States Senator than possibly a Republican attorney general. Therefore, if they had a dollar we should get 75¢ of it. The candidate for attorney general would only get 25¢. You would argue and show what you needed the money for.

In politics you always could use twice as much as you have, unless you are as successful as the Republicans were in 1972. Then I guess you don't know what to do with it and you get into mischief.

Fry: I did notice that you turned back some funds. At the end of the campaign there was a refund of $2,500 to the Northern California branch of the United Republican Finance Committee. Now I don't know whether that was a bookkeeping thing or whether it was a real refund.

Dinkelspiel: I would doubt it. I will say this. I don't mean to sprout wings at this late date, but we ran it absolutely on the up and up. The names I mentioned, most of whom are unknown to you but generally they're all people of the highest integrity that we had in Northern California. [emphatically] I know of no one that we had that had any questionable reputation of integrity.

At that time when these men--they were mostly men, it being before the day of real activity of women in politics. It seems strange today, but as you notice most of them are men,

Dinkelspiel: although we did have a few women later on as chairmen. But we did not overspend, and we accounted for everything. As I say, we were not extravagant. We got along on very little.

There was one interesting experience that I did have. You asked if I ever went around with Nixon. On one occasion during the campaign--and I'm sure this was during the actual campaign rather than the primary--but he came to San Francisco to campaign. We had several different appointments, but one of the things that we had planned was to have him go around and talk at different spots. For instance, one of the plans was to have a so-called parade up California Street to Montgomery Street and stop at the corner of California and Montgomery Street.

Fry: Was that the torch light parade I read about in the newspapers?

Dinkelspiel: No, this was in the middle of the day at noontime. You always had those in the noontime because that was when all the workers would come out of the buildings and you'd get the biggest crowd. Then we would stop and Nixon would get up and have a loudspeaker and make a speech. I always felt Nixon was a very effective speaker.

But anyhow, on this one visit that evening we scheduled a meeting out near the Marina High School which had a sort of plaza which we thought would be a good place to make a speech. I'd guess you'd call it dirty tricks on the other side, the first time I'd ever seen it. Some people from the Douglas campaign came out there with lots of sound machines so that every time he opened up they would start the noise. So, they wouldn't let him speak.

Fry: In a sound truck?

Dinkelspiel: Yes, a whole bunch of them.

Fry: Yes, I think I read something about that in the San Francisco Examiner. There was sort of a war of loudspeakers.

Dinkelspiel: Then Nixon just stood his ground. He just stood and put up his hand, and finally they shut the thing off. He then spoke and said that the very fact that they were making this noise was one of the reasons why he felt as strongly as he did on the right of speech. They're the ones who feel that he was throttling free speech, and they were the very ones who refused to let him talk. He said he didn't object to them disagreeing with him, but at least he had a right to talk.

Dinkelspiel: I can't remember any more than numerous trips he had made. He made three or four visits to this area. We would plan which part of the northern part of the state he should visit, where the votes were and where they needed buoying up, which I guess is done in every political campaign.

Fry: Not necessarily. In Jimmy Roosevelt's governor campaign the same year, they decided he should appear in every county, and he spread himself pretty thin going to counties of very low voting population.

Dinkelspiel: Yes, that's a mistake. I guess it was poor advice.

Fry: What was the Flying Squadron? Did you have that up here?

Dinkelspiel: No.

Fry: Or was that just a Southern California thing?

Dinkelspiel: I don't know what it is.

Fry: I don't either, except it was either a group of women workers who were separated out for that function, or else it was a squadron that went around and was assigned to visit Helen Gahagan Douglas's speeches.

Dinkelspiel: I don't know anything about that. If that existed we never had any part of it.

Fry: Did you have a group that rode to opponents' speeches? In most campaigns they're called truth squads. I don't know what they were called in this campaign.

Dinkelspiel: No, we did not. To the best of my knowledge we had nothing like that at all.

Fry: No follow-ups after her speeches?

Dinkelspiel: No.

Civic League of Improvements Clubs and Associations

Fry: Do you remember the Commonwealth Club debate between Nixon and Helen Douglas that was held in San Francisco?

Dinkelspiel: No, I really don't. I don't remember that they did debate. I'm not saying they didn't but, but I don't have any recollection of it.

Fry: The other thing that's come out in my research is that there was a Civic League of Improvement Clubs and Associations in the Mills Building in San Francisco.

Dinkelspiel: Yes.

Fry: They received $4,000 from the United Republican Finance Committee of Northern California for mailing.

Dinkelspiel: Yes.

Fry: What was this league? [laughing] There goes your grin again, but I don't know what it means!

Dinkelspiel: That league has been here as long as I've been in San Francisco. It's completely--it was set up by some people whose names I shan't mention. You can do the research yourself. It's been a racket in my opinion. They use the name, so it implies to the public that it's a nonpolitical, honest, fair thing. Very potent--has been; I don't know if it is today anymore, but it was at that time a very potent organization. They would vote in your favor, but you had to pay for the mailing. As I remember they supported Earl Warren too.

Fry: I couldn't tell who they were supporting because the record is with this general Republican committee.

Dinkelspiel: Yes, but that's what it is. I'm sure if you look back in Earl Warren's campaigns, you'd find that they probably supported him. I'm sure they did a mailing for Goodwin Knight--if they supported him.

Fry: It looks like they funneled their funds through this general committee which in turn then--

Dinkelspiel: I don't know how they worked.

Fry: It's hard to find in the records.

Dinkelspiel: I don't know if it's still around.

Fry: That's interesting. But it was primarily Republican, right?

Dinkelspiel: I wouldn't think so, no.

Fry: How did they decide on who to back--whoever would give the mailing money?

Dinkelspiel: No, I presume they had a vote. They had a committee and I guess they voted.

Fry: How were they potent? In what way?

Dinkelspiel: Because they had a complete mailing list in San Francisco. They had a name of--Civic Improvement League?

Fry: It was a funny name, Civic League of Improvement Clubs and Associations.

Dinkelspiel: It sounds like it was a conglomerate of everything, which in effect it wasn't. As far as I knew, it was just a group with a conglomerate name, with a good name. They had some important people involved, so when they sent out their mailing the average voter would follow its recommendations, like some people follow the recommendation of the League of Women Voters, others the Commonwealth Club, etc. But this was "across the board," and it was a very important and influential organization. I don't know whether it still has its potency, but we considered it very important to obtain its support.

Fry: [laughing] You had to go along with it, operate with it.

Dinkelspiel: Yes.

Fry: You also had an agriculture committee within the Nixon campaign structure.

Dinkelspiel: I'm sure we did. We had different ethnic groups. We had different professional groups. That's part of the organization, as I found out after I got into the political swim, that those had to be formed. They were effective. We had doctors' organizations and lawyers for Nixon, as I remember. I can't remember all the different categories. We had Irish Americans and so forth. That was accepted practice. But I'm sure that the Douglas campaign had exactly the same thing.

Fry: Warren's campaigns too had those. But they are fairly invisible in the Nixon campaign reports in the state archives and the newspapers, except for this agriculture committee. I wondered if there were any other committees like this?

Dinkelspiel: I can't remember, but I wouldn't be surprised if we didn't have other committees. I think we did.

Campaign Workers and Issues

Fry: There are other names that keep popping up, and I wondered how much they have to do with the Northern California part of the campaign. You say Bernie Brennan was fairly important. Was he mainly in Southern California?

Dinkelspiel: Yes.

Fry: Did you work with him?

Dinkelspiel: Yes, he was my counterpart in Southern California. Nixon was from down there, so he was better known in the south. Through his friendship at that time with Chotiner, that was the headquarters. We were the country cousins up here.

Fry: Was Herbert Klein a publicity man in this campaign?

Dinkelspiel: Not that I recall. I met him later on. I don't remember him in the senatorial campaign.

Fry: Jack Drown, one of Nixon's oldest friends, was he in it?

Dinkelspiel: Yes.

Fry: Did he help any in Northern California?

Dinkelspiel: No, I think Jack was at some of these meetings that we had back and forth. Once in a while we'd have a meeting here or down south--mostly down south or at San Ysidro; you mentioned the one that we had at San Ysidro--and Jack Drown would come. They apparently were very close personal friends of the Nixons. I believe Helene, Mrs. Drown, was a classmate of Pat Nixon.

Fry: I think they taught together.

Dinkelspiel: I knew there was some social background. They were always close together during all of the time that I knew Nixon, yes.

Fry: Was Jack Drown an idea man like Murray Chotiner was?

Dinkelspiel: Oh, no. No, I think he was just a friend, just a friend and that's all.

Fry: There's another name, Ray Arbuthnot. Was he in the Drown crowd?

Dinkelspiel: Yes. He was more politically activated than Drown, but I think he also had been a personal friend of Nixon's. Ray Arbuthnot had a ranch, as I recall, out near the Whittier area.

Dinkelspiel: We had a meeting at his ranch on one occasion. That's about all I know. I knew him. I haven't seen him in a number of years, but I always believed that he and Drown were old friends.

Ray Arbuthnot ran for the vice-chairman of the Republican State Central Committee when I was on the committee some years later and was opposed by Howard Ahmanson, who was a friend and political benefactor of Goodwin Knight. This was when Knight was the governor. A very heated contest developed because under the party traditions the vice-chairman of one year automatically becomes the chairman the following year. The chairmanship and vice-chairmanship rotate between north and south. So it was important.

Fry: There's a man who was very big in International Rotarians, Carl Miller.

Dinkelspiel: I never heard of him.

Fry: He must be Southern California.

What about Milton Essberg?

Dinkelspiel: Oh, he didn't have much to do with it. He was the--sort of the chairman of the San Francisco branch of the United Republican Finance Committee. That's about all. He wasn't particularly active. He's always been active in the Republican party as such. But he had no particular identification with Nixon.

Fry: Oh, this was the state Republican convention?

Dinkelspiel: Essberg is either the Republican county committee, or I think he is the public relation man for the United Republican Finance Committee's Northern California group. He's the one that, as I understand it, goes out and keeps the list up and sends out the appropriate letters. I think he's in the public relation business or something of that sort.

Fry: In San Francisco was there an Orla St. Clair?

Dinkelspiel: Yes. He was an attorney who subsequently became a superior court judge. He has since died. He was the San Francisco chairman.

Fry: Was he a person that you had chosen?

Dinkelspiel: Yes.

Fry: Can you remember what it meant to the campaign when the Korean War broke out in June, 1950, right after the primary? It appears superficially that this was quite a shot in the arm to Nixon's theme of the encroachment of Communism.

Dinkelspiel: I guess it was. I couldn't remember it now. It obviously was, because that was the clear case of a Communist group moving over the Yalu River.

Fry: Nixon came out with a four point program of action to combat the Communist conspiracy--I'm moving backward in time now, before the Korean War broke out, to his first really big speech on the Communist conspiracy. It was a major policy address on March 12, 1950. I think that was where he put forth this four point program for the first time. I wondered if you remembered any discussion of this?

Dinkelspiel: No, the only thing I recall--I was with him on numerous meetings and he always permitted questions. I can recall him remarking on several occasions (as to the time and place I can't recall), "I would like to talk on some other subject other than Communism." No matter whatever happened the very first question would be on Communism, and the next question and the next question would all be aimed back at Communism. He finally remarked one time, "There's no use trying to talk about anything else, because that's all the people want to hear about."

Fry: What else was he trying to talk about?

Dinkelspiel: Oh, he talked at that time of various agricultural plans when we were down in the [San Joaquin] Valley. I can't remember the issues of the--

Fry: Brannan plan?

Dinkelspiel: Yes, the Brannan plan. At that time there was some issue being brought up on the development of a water system in the state or the Reber plan. I remember the name Reber plan. R-e-b-e-r. It's almost impossible, without some refreshment of memory, to recall what the issues were.

Fry: In agriculture were his speeches mainly anti-Brannan plan and for protective tariffs on farm products? Those two issues came up in one of his Valley speeches.

Dinkelspiel: I wouldn't have any recollections on that, no.

Fry: What about tidelands oil as one of these other issues?

Dinkelspiel: I don't ever recall the subject.

Fry: He did mention sometimes that he thought the Hiss case should be reopened and some of the other people involved in it investigated. Do you remember any about that?

Dinkelspiel: I don't remember that. I think he felt very strongly that Hiss was guilty and he so expressed numerous times. I don't remember him ever reopening the case at all.

Fry: There was a March 12, 1950 story in the [San Francisco] Examiner, written expressly for the Examiner by Richard Nixon. I thought this was quite a publicity coup. It was a pretty long column. Do you remember anything like that?

Dinkelspiel: No.

Fry: I could just see you going and talking to the editor of the Examiner and setting this up.

Dinkelspiel: I don't remember it.

Fry: It was headlined "Exposure in Hiss Case Brings Stern Demand for Action." That was kind of a theme of his article.

The other thing I wondered about was the recordings that were made. This must have been for radio stations, but I don't know. John Wolf and Company on New Montgomery Street was paid $1,280.20 for recording.

Dinkelspiel: Those I'm sure would be for radio. There was no other recording.

Fry: Who would have written the scripts for those, do you know? Would that have been Hancock?

Dinkelspiel: I guess Hancock or maybe the scripts would have come out of Los Angeles and they were retaped here in Northern California. I'm only guessing, but I would assume that if they were made here that, apparently, on one of his trips, they would go in and Nixon would make these tapes. Now whether they had short tapes and long tapes--the word "tape" is an ugly word today, but at that time it was used.

Fry: I think they were records.

Dinkelspiel: They were records for use and, I would think, for radio.

Fry: I gather that Murray Chotiner worked out the copy for the billboards and other campaign materials.

Dinkelspiel: That's right.

Fry: I wonder how much influence Murray Chotiner had on the Northern California campaign?

Dinkelspiel: As I mentioned, he would prepare it and if we didn't like it we wouldn't use it. As I read in the letter, I don't know what I didn't like, but apparently I didn't like something very badly because I was very abrupt. So if we didn't like it, we didn't use it in Northern California. We had no control over what they were using in Southern California. I don't remember where our boundary went, but there was some point--I think we went probably down through Monterey or Kings County. Then from there Southern California picked it up.

Fry: I keep picking up inferences that there was a difference between the Southern California campaign and the Northern California campaign.

Dinkelspiel: In some of the literature and some of the methods, yes. We did not use in Northern California some of the items which they developed in Southern California.

Fry: Like what--the "Pink Sheet"?

Dinkelspiel: That's right.

Fry: What about the whole bit about Marcantonio? Did you try not to use that or did you go ahead? It was an ongoing thing over a period of a number of weeks.

Dinkelspiel: We may have used it--used that reference in some respects. Again, I don't recall exactly where, but we didn't harp on the fact or the implication that Helen Gahagan Douglas was tied in with and saw completely eye to eye with Marcantonio.

Fry: Why didn't you?

Dinkelspiel: Well, I didn't feel then, and I don't now feel, that it's necessarily a proper approach.

Fry: I noticed that Helen Gahagan Douglas's literature then came out and said that Nixon had voted with Marcantonio 112 times, mostly on foreign policy. I thought maybe that had something to do with not using the Marcantonio issue.

Dinkelspiel: Maybe. The pot is calling the kettle black or red I should say.

Fry: [laughing] Or red, yes.

What do you think of the reports of the phone calls?

[end tape 3, side 1; begin tape 3, side 2]

Dinkelspiel: I don't understand your question.

Fry: You know, after the campaign was over reports came out about the telephone calls that were made anonymously. I don't know whether this was Northern California or not. It could have been only Southern California. A receiver of the call would pick up the phone and a voice would say, "Vote for Nixon. Helen Gahagan Douglas is a Communist," or something like that and would hang up. There were a number of scattered reports of this.

Dinkelspiel: If there were I never heard of it.

Fry: You never heard of that?

Dinkelspiel: No. We had nothing to do with that. We never had that.

Fry: It could have been centered in Southern California.

Dinkelspiel: Never! When you're in a political arena people get very exercised and there's no way one can police millions of people. If you were to ask me did we ever have such a plan, my answer would be emphatically no! We never did. Now, whether people would call up, as you say they did, I just wouldn't know.

We always felt also that the other side were using unfair tactics. Whether you ever could prove it or not, I just don't recall. I mean there were various items. For instance in the campaign--we never could put our finger on it--we always felt there was an underlying accusation against Nixon for being anti-Semitic. We attempted to counter that as best we could. It's a very difficult problem to solve.

Also on one occasion he was speaking, there was some situation that implied that he was anti-Catholic. I know that members of the committee, Arthur Dolan and Alvin Derre (I mentioned his name; he had been very active in the campaign) were Catholic. They were very much upset about the implications that were made. I remember meeting at the St. Francis Hotel a few days before the election to consider what if anything could be done to counter this. So, those things occur. You can't prove them and you can't say that the other side originated them, unless you can actually prove that the director said go and do it. But we did not ever have any part of that.

Fry: But then it existed you had to deal with it.

Dinkelspiel: As I say, in politics you do have that general situation. When you get it, you try to deal with it the best way you can under the circumstances. I know of no campaign by Nixon of picking up the phone, as you've just mentioned. If that occurred, it's certainly something that I know nothing about.

No Strong Endorsement From Earl Warren

Fry: There's one other very important question that I forgot to ask you. Was there any attempt made to get Earl Warren to come out for Nixon? Some books discuss Murray Chotiner's plan to force Warren to come out for Nixon.

Dinkelspiel: Yes. Yes. Yes, there was. There was an attempt made to get Warren to come out, and he just wouldn't. He wouldn't do it. He wouldn't take a position.

Fry: What was the attempt?

Dinkelspiel: I guess someone who knew Warren closer than I did, or people closer to him, tried to get him to come out and say, "I support Richard Nixon." I think he more or less at the very last, kind of by faint praise, came out. But Warren never strongly endorsed Nixon.

Fry: Chotiner's story, as given in these books, is that after a speech, in a question and answer period, they finally forced Helen Douglas into a position of coming out for James Roosevelt. Then the Nixon campaign people took this to Warren and said, "Now will you come out for the Republican candidate?" I don't know whether that a true story or not.

Dinkelspiel: It's like what happens today. Every Democrat aspirant for the presidency is asked a question on every program, "Would you have Governor [George] Wallace as a running mate?" I've yet to have one answer yes or no. [laughter]

[end tape 3, side 2]

Fry: I know it is late and you have to run. Thank you very much.

Transcriber: Marlene Keller
Final Typist: Keiko Sugimoto

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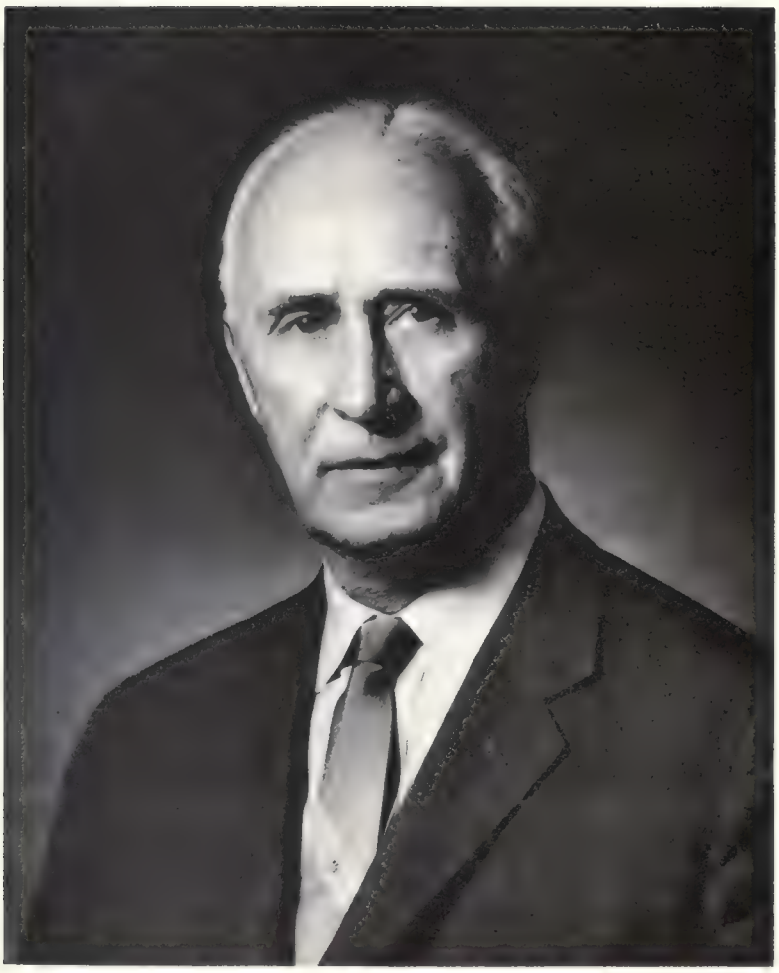
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Earl Adams

San Francisco Chronicle
April 3, 1986

Earl C. Adams

Pasadena

Earl C. Adams, 93, an architect of the early political campaigns of Richard Nixon, died Monday.

Adams, who practiced law in Los Angeles for more than 60 years, was one of the Southern Californians who first encouraged Nixon to run for Congress after World War II.

Adams remained close to the future president, and Nixon joined Adams' law firm after he lost the 1960 presidential race to John F. Kennedy.

A graduate of Stanford University, Adams interrupted his studies at Harvard Law School to serve in the Army in World War I. He completed his law degree at Stanford in 1920.

Adams worked for the state Corporation Department before entering private practice in 1926. He was campaign chairman and adviser to the senatorial campaigns of Thomas Kuchel, William Knowland and George Murphy.

Associated Press

Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library

University of California
Berkeley, California

Earl Warren Oral History Office

Earl Adams

FINANCING RICHARD NIXON'S CAMPAIGNS FROM 1946 TO 1960

An Interview Conducted by
Amelia R. Fry
in 1975

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INTERVIEW HISTORY--Earl Adams

Time of Interview: Afternoon of February 20, 1975.

Place of Interview: Mr. Adam's law office in the firm of Adams, Duque & Hazeltine, in the Pacific Mutual Building in downtown Los Angeles.

The Interview:

As one who had helped launch Richard Nixon for Congress in the 1946 race, Earl Adams stands as a fund-raiser and an important political force in the Earl Warren era; his significance is heightened when one acknowledges his state leadership roles in Nixon's subsequent campaigns for vice-president in 1952, president in 1960, governor in 1962, and president in 1968. In addition, he has been a member of the executive committee of the Republican State Central Committee; and he worked for U.S. Senator Thomas Kuchel, first as a member of his finance committee in the 1954 short-term election, then as his Southern California campaign chairman in 1956; in 1958 he was U.S. Senator William Knowland's southern campaign chairman in his race for the governorship.

We do not dwell at length on the 1946 campaign in this interview because Mr. Adams had already taped one such interview with Paul Bullock for the latter's biography of Jerry Voorhis, Nixon's opponent in 1946; also because a year and a half before our meeting he had joined with three other Nixon leaders, Frank Jorgensen, Rockwood Nelson (deceased by the time of our interview), and Boyd Gibbons, in taping their joint recollections in a do-it-yourself session. The availability of the information he gave to Professor Bullock was assured by the publication of the Voorhis book, and Adams volunteered to donate a copy of the Jorgensen-Nelson-Gibbons-Adams transcription to The Bancroft Library as soon as all four have had a chance to review it.

This transcript, then, focuses on the 1952-to-68 period, with diminishing emphasis as the interview moves beyond the final year of the Earl Warren time frame (1953) for which larger project research was designed. Much of that should be recaptured in more detail in an additional oral history interview, as should also some of Adams's personal background, including data on his grandfather who came to California after the gold rush by coursing down the Mississippi River, across the Gulf of Mexico, and through the Isthmus of Panama.

Still a busy lawyer in the financial district of Los Angeles, Mr. Adams nonetheless obligingly cleared his calendar to make time for a session. We talked briefly before turning on the tape recorder, in order to determine what areas of Adams's life we should concentrate on, particularly concerning Richard Nixon. At the time we taped, the trauma of the Watergate affair was in its denouement, and Adams's longtime friend was recuperating and rebuilding his health in nearby San Clemente. The abrupt turn of events in the career of the man he had known for so long had left Adams mulling the big "Why" after reading some of the White House tape transcripts.

Still looking every inch the Harvard lawyer--well-dressed, slim, sparkling white hair--he would be picked out of a crowd as a distinguished gentleman. Mr. Adams sees himself as "ultra conservative" on fiscal and foreign policy matters, as "liberal conservative" on others. A fluent elocution ability, which must contribute to the success of a campaign leader, was apparent in the session as he couched his sentences with easy eloquence. A few questions he fielded; others he voluntarily expanded on, much to the benefit of future historians.

Preliminary emendations, questions on the ambiguities that arise when converting oral speech into written, and aurally obscure words were noted by Teresa Allen on the transcript and then mailed to him October 9, 1978. After checking these problems, Mr. Adams tightened language here and there to reflect more closely what he had originally meant, cautiously put a small section under seal, and softened two passages which he felt were sharp and inaccurate in their connotations as a result of the conversion from oral to written language. He returned the interview July 23, 1979, and we conferred further by telephone on some inserts needed to fill in the story of his relationship to Senator Kuchel as the 1960s progressed, another bit to help identify his father, a passage left hanging unfinished when a tape had been turned, and a final agreement to shorten the passage to be placed under seal until 1990. These changes were photocopied and sent to him September 10 and he approved them and the whole transcript for final typing September 17, 1979.

At the present time he is negotiating the permission necessary for the deposit of the transcript on the 1946 Nixon campaign which he had taped with his three political associates; Mr. Adams plans to get together within a few weeks with Boyd Gibbons and Frank Jorgensen to iron out some discrepancies before depositing the manuscript.

Altogether, thanks are due Mr. Adams for his persistence and follow-through in seeing that his portion of California history and Nixoniana are appropriately preserved.

Amelia R. Fry

September 30, 1979
Berkeley, California

Childhood, Education, and War Experience

[Date of Interview: February 20, 1975]
[begin tape 1, side 1]

Fry: Just to begin with, could I have a little thumbnail sketch of where you grew up and where you went to school?

Adams: I was born in San Jose, California, a little town about fifty miles south of San Francisco--a little then, large now. I was educated in the schools of that county, Santa Clara County. The grammar school in my district--which on reflection now and as I look back I'm happy to say that I had that sort of an education--was one of those semi-country schools where they had as many, sometimes, as three grades in one room. When I graduated from that grammar school I went to the high school at San Jose and graduated from there, and then went to Stanford University.

Fry: What was your father?

Adams: My father was a contractor--not a building contractor, but a road contractor. His name was John F. Adams. He built the first big road from Los Gatos over the Santa Cruz Mountains to Santa Cruz.

Fry: Is that still the same route that we take now?

Adams: Yes. Before that you went 'way on down south by the Hotel de Redwood, way up on top of the hill, and then came around via Soquel to Santa Ctuz. But the new road cut that off, shortened the distance.

Fry: So you're a native Californian. And you went to Stanford?

Adams: I'm a native Californian, and my father was a native Californian, too. My granddad, William Henry Adams, was born in 1828. He came here a little after the days of the gold rush. He settled in Grass Valley, California, where my father was born.

Fry: We're going backwards instead of forwards, but how did your grandfather get here? Did he come around the Horn?

Adams: No, he was with one of those groups that went down the Mississippi and crossed the Gulf of Mexico and landed on the Gulf side of the Isthmus of Panama, and then crossed the Isthmus and came out onto the Pacific Ocean. Then they came by steamer or boat up the Pacific coast to San Francisco. Most of them in his group died of cholera, I used to hear him say, in crossing the Panama.

When my granddad got out on the Pacific slope--and by the way this hasn't much to do with Nixon--getting a ship to San Francisco was difficult because they were scarce, and there were lots of people who wanted to get aboard. Being anxious to get up here, he managed to get on a boat to what was San Pedro,* hoping that from San Pedro he could get a boat to San Francisco. So in those days he came up through Los Angeles from San Pedro to see what was here, and I often heard him say that there was only fifteen hundred people in Los Angeles at that time, all Mexicans and Indians. I've taken the time since then to look at the census--or what was available to compare to a census--and I found that there was 1,650 people here. So he wasn't very far off.

Eventually he became deputy county clerk in Nevada County, California. After he died, I tried to find the records, but the courthouse in Nevada City burned down about 1856, and the records were destroyed.

Anyway, I entered Stanford University in 1912 and graduated in 1916. I went then to the Harvard Law School. I was there until war was declared. We're talking now, strange as it may seem, about the First World War. Then I left Harvard Law School and enlisted in the army. War was declared, I think, in early April, April 6th or thereabouts, and before the end of the month I was in the army.

I was sent out to the Presidio and from there I went to Camp Lewis, Washington, then to Camp Jackson, South Carolina, and then went overseas. I served with the artillery of the Ninety-first Division for a while--that would be Battery A of the Three hundred and Forty-sixth Field Artillery--and from there to Battery F of the Hundred and seventh Field Artillery, 28th Division, until the termination of the war. Then I came home in May of 1919. If that's helpful, that's a capsule of my childhood, my education, and my war experience.

---

*The village of San Pedro was consolidated with the city of Los Angeles in 1909.--ed.

Richard Nixon is Elected to Congress, 1946

Adams's Political Background

Fry: Now we need a capsule of your political experience up to the time when you were in this small group known as the fact-finding committee or the Committee of One Hundred Twenty-five.

Adams: I was living then in San Marino, where I still live. San Marino was a part of what was then the Twelfth Congressional District.* I've forgotten what it is now, but that was the old congressional district. Our congressman at that time was Jerry Voorhis, a man of fine character and an honest man and a good man and a well-intentioned man. But from my viewpoint and those around me who were interested in obtaining a change, we didn't think Jerry Voorhis was very effective. Not effective not only in respect to us, but he wasn't really effective within his own Democratic party. And frankly, he represented a political philosophy that I didn't adhere to, that I didn't think was in the best interests of our country. In other words, we were philosophically at opposite ends insofar as politics was concerned.

Fry: Before that had you been in any campaigns, or were you connected with the volunteer organization, the California Republican Assembly?

Adams: The only experience I had before that in a political way was when Wendell Willkie ran for the presidency against Franklin Roosevelt in 1940. I was chairman of the Willkie campaign in my area out there, San Marino.

Fry: So you were working with Mac [McIntyre] Faries?

Adams: Yes. I think Mac was the county chairman or state chairman. I can't remember which. But in my own area out there I was the chairman of the Willkie campaign. So that answers your question as to my prior political experience.

Fry: What was the role of the California Republican Assembly in Nixon getting started in '46?**

---

*The Twelfth District at that time stretched from the eastern border of Los Angeles to the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains.--ed.

**Richard Nixon was elected to the U.S. Congress from the California Twelfth Congressional District in 1946, defeating William J. Kinnett in the primary and incumbent Jerry Voorhis in the general election.--ed.

Adams: Oh, none that I recall. I may be in error here, but I can't recall our group getting any help from any of the established Republican organizations insofar as Nixon's first campaign was concerned. As a matter of fact, I know of instances where people wanted to donate money and, being cautious before they did so, would make inquiry to the Republican headquarters over here. They were told that we were just a rump, inexperienced organization, and that they'd do much better to send their money in to the Republican headquarters and they would spend it where they thought a candidate had a greater chance of being elected. The Republican organization didn't feel that Nixon had any chance at all to lick Voorhis. Now, I'm not trying to cut down the Republican organization. You asked me a question, and I'm telling you as I remember it. I think Mr. [Frank] Jorgensen and Mr. Boyd Gibbons will tell you the same thing. I don't think there's any question about that.

Fry: What were the Republican Associates?

Adams: I don't remember whether the Republican Associates was functioning at that time. It may have been. No, I think it came into being afterwards, and I may be wrong. But anyway, the Republican Associates was really founded not to be a participant in a political campaign. It was more a research and educative function of the Republican party. I don't think it was ever intended by the Republican Associates to select candidates, sponsor candidates, or do things of that kind. But I don't remember it being in existence at that time. It may have been, but you'll have to count me out.

Murray Chotiner

Fry: I wonder if you could explain to me again Murray Chotiner's role in 1946? I'd just like to get that on tape.

Adams: What I can say in that regard is that, notwithstanding what I have read in the newspapers and periodicals and in the books that have been written by various authors about Nixon--his life, his political life particularly--it seems to me that it is generally always mentioned that Murray Chotiner ran Nixon's campaign in 1946. When I say Nixon's campaign of 1946, I mean the first time that Nixon ever offered himself to the public as a candidate for a public office. I have no recollection of Murray Chotiner being part of the group that found Nixon and promoted him and participated in the activities that led up to his election in 1946.

Adams: The man who ran his campaign, if you want to talk about chairmen, was Roy Day in the primary. But that wasn't much of a campaign because of the fact that the Republican, William J. Kinnett, that was opposing Nixon for the nomination in the primary was an unknown--much more unknown than Nixon--and didn't have any great amount of support. No one paid much attention to him. His name has long since been forgotten. Whatever that campaign was in the primary, Roy Day did manage that campaign, principally because of the fact that he was then a member of the Republican County Central Committee [Los Angeles County] and the chairman of that area [the Twelfth District] and automatically stepped into that post or that authority.

The chairman of the Nixon campaign in the general election was a man by the name of Harrison McCall, who has since died, so you can't talk to him. But it was not Murray Chotiner. It was Harrison McCall who was his chairman.

Fry: Some records look like Murray Chotiner was pretty busy in Bill Knowland's campaign.

Adams: Well, he could have been.

Fry: I think maybe he was the head of the Knowland campaign in Southern California.

Adams: No. It was Ed Shattuck, who I believe was Knowland's state chairman. I don't remember seeing Murray Chotiner at any of the meetings, any of the house meetings or public meetings we had in the first Nixon campaign of 1946, except at the last meeting that was held in Alhambra. I saw him there, but he wasn't there as a member of the fact-finding committee. He wasn't a member of the organization. He was there meeting people and, what little I observed him, he was taking notes. I don't know whether or not, even at that time, he knew Nixon.

Fry: I wonder why he was there?

Adams: He was a member, I think, of the county central committee, and he may have been out there as an observer.

Campaign Fundraising

Fry: I thought maybe you could fill in, if something needs to be filled in, about Harrison McCall's role in 1946.

Adams: I know that Harrison McCall was hired at a dinner meeting we had at Frank Jorgensen's home to be Dick Nixon's campaign chairman in the general election. Frank Jorgensen was then living in San Marino. I can recall that during the course of the meeting we settled upon a compensation for McCall for $500, not $500 a month, but $500 for the campaign. When the meeting was over I remember walking out with Frank Jorgensen onto the lawn of the yard, and saying to him, "Frank, where are we going to get the $500?" So that's how much $500 meant in those days.

Fry: Were your really big money raisers, like Asa Call in Los Angeles and people like this, approached for that campaign?

Adams: No, I don't think so. I can't remember that. Now, Asa may have helped, but it was all within our district. I mean my activities were all within the district. For instance, I gave a $25 dinner at my home, trying to raise a little money. Mr. Kenneth Norris, who lived back of me, gave a like dinner. We used means such as that to raise money. There was no $100 a plate, or $500 a plate, or $1000 a plate. It was $25, which we all thought was an awful lot of money. And I'm sure that people who came thought they were being overcharged for what they got.

[interruption, tape off]

Adams: The recollections of these four--Jorgensen, Rockwood Nelson, Boyd Gibbons, and myself--have been transcribed. I'll try to make a xerox of it and let you have it, if Mr. Jorgensen and Mr. Gibbons agree.

Fry: That would help a lot.

We can just move on then to 1952, since you said that you didn't have anything to do with 1950.

Adams: No, I didn't. And this transcript of the tapes that I mentioned, which represents the recollection of the four of us, will take you through the 1945-46 bringing out of Rixhard Nixon.

Fry: Were you glad that Nixon ran for the Senate in 1950? Why weren't you participating in that campaign?

Adams: I can't remember. I was glad. I was fearful he might not be elected, but I was glad that he was moving on up.

The Nixon Fund, 1952

Adams: Nineteen fifty-two was when he ran for the vice-presidency. I had nothing to do with that, other than that I was on a finance committee in this area to raise money for the Eisenhower-Nixon ticket.

Fry: After the convention?

Adams: After the convention. I did not go to the convention. I was not a delegate. I came into it only in that small way, after General Eisenhower and Richard Nixon had been nominated for the presidency and vice-presidency on the Republican ticket.

Fry: Then they started a campaign on a train down here in Southern California that went up the state.

Adams: That was a little bit before the fund--the "Checkers" matter--broke.*

Fry: I think that when the train got to Bakersfield the story was blooming.

Adams: Somewhere around there; I can't remember. The fund itself had started before that, and I can't give you how much before that. But the catalyst in connection with that fund was Dana Smith of San Marino or South Pasadena, I don't remember which.

I can remember attending a meeting, and it may have been the first meeting that Smith called--I can't be sure if it was the first or some subsequent meeting, but it was one of the early meetings--in which he outlined under the then-present law (I'm now talking about the time immediately following when Nixon was elected United States Senator; I'm not talking about the Eisenhower-Nixon campaign) how a senator could return to his own state only once a year at government expense. Any other trip made by the candidate to his home state beyond that one trip would have to be paid by the candidate himself.

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*In late 1950 Dana Smith, a Southern California attorney who had been finance chairman of Nixon's Senate campaign, helped establish for the Senator an on-going fund for mailing, travel, and other political expenses. In September, 1952 this was publicized and drew criticism. While pressure mounted for him to resign as the Republican nominee for vice-president, Nixon successfully defended his place on the ticket in a televised speech which has come to be called the "Checkers" speech. Copy in volume supporting documents in The Bancroft Library.

Adams: Well now, Nixon's state of California was some three thousand miles or more from Washington. It was not like being a senator from Delaware or a senator from New Jersey, where you can go home in an afternoon without it costing you very much. Nixon's finances were such that he just couldn't afford more than one trip beyond that one trip out here to California. One of the reasons that prompted the meeting and the attempt to raise a little money was to provide funds to permit him to make these extra trips, the theory being that if you're going to be a good representative of your people, you have to be in touch with them once in a while. You can't keep in touch with them by being three thousand miles or more away in Washington, D.C.

So that was one of the purposes that the money was to be used for. Other purposes were to permit him to use the money to frank literature that he could not frank under the government expense, and similar things of that kind, all for the purpose of keeping him in touch with his constituents here in the state of California and providing him with the funds to do what he couldn't otherwise do.

As I remember, no contribution was to be more than $350. I read in the paper the other day, when they were rehashing this on television, that the contributions were limited to $500. I don't remember the $500 figure. My recollection is that it was $350. The money was to be turned over to Dana Smith, and the names of the contributors were not to be furnished at any time by Dana Smith to Richard Nixon. So he would not know who it was that was putting up this money, the theory being there to shut off any connection between contributor and the elected official so that contributors couldn't claim favoritism or ask for favors and things of that kind.

Fry: Was that at Nixon's request, or was it Dana Smith's idea?

Adams: As far as I'm concerned, it could have been at Nixon's request. He wasn't there. It was Dana Smith who was making the statement, and I imagine he was speaking for the Senator because Smith must have been in touch with Nixon on it. I can't even tell you whether or not this was done by Dana Smith on his own and without contact with Nixon. I don't know.

But I can tell you that the contributions were limited to a very small, modest amount. Your names were not to be divulged to the Senator. He was not to use the money under any circumstance for his personal expenses. The money was only to defray these costs and expenses that were necessary to bring him in contact with the people out here in California which could not be expense to the government. It was an honest, decent, clean purpose, and the fund was a damned small one, only about $18,000 or thereabouts.

Fry: It was so small by today's standards.

Adams: That was the way the fund matter started, those were the purposes of the fund, and those were the purposes for which the money was to be used.

Fry: Do you have a theory of why this was brought up as a controversial thing?

Adams: Oh, my theory would be--and it could be erroneous--that it's awfully good newspaper talk. It's lead information. It's something that attracts the public; it's good news; it makes headlines.

Fry: I think both Earl Mazo and Leo Katcher suggest in their books that this story was fed to the press by the people who were disgruntled about Nixon's work for Eisenhower on the Earl Warren delegation [to the 1952 Republican convention]. In other words, the press was fed the story by pro-Warren people.

Adams: That could be.

Fry: I wondered if you knew anything about that.

Adams: No, I don't. That could be a very reasonable surmise. I would have no information on that. However, I can assure you that it's something the press would grab very quickly, because it's good news.

Fry: Sure, it's startling. But I wasn't sure it was startling news, because having funds for non-congressional expenses was not altogether unusual.

Adams: Well, it made good news. It startled the whole country!

Fry: What did you do then? Did you try to help Nixon in representing him here, or anything like that, in connection with that fund story?

Adams: No, nothing other than the fact that I contacted him, only by telegram, when he and his wife, Pat, returned here to the Ambassador Hotel from which, I think, he televised his "Checkers talk." But, no, I didn't.

I knew what he was up against. He had Murray Chotiner and a great group around him that were advising him--some of them advising him badly and some of them advising him in good fashion. I thought he got a lot of bad advice from a lot of big people at that time.

Fry: What was some of the bad advice he got?

Adams: I think some of the big political figures at that time that were around him were urging him to get off the ticket.

Fry: Was Chotiner?

Adams: No. Chotiner was giving him the best, most solid advice of any man that was around him, in my opinion.

Fry: Was Bernie [Bernard] Brennan?

Adams: Bernie was there, but I think that Chotiner had taken the lead on the whole thing. I think Chotiner had the best grasp of the situation. I think he gave Nixon the best advice. I think Chotiner was the most solid and sincere friend that Nixon had at that time. Now, there may be others that were sincere, but a good many of them, I think, were giving him bad advice, urging him to get off the ticket when he hadn't done anything that was wrong. I don't think that he did anything that was wrong. Why jump off the ticket when you did no more than permit your friends to raise a few dollars to be used for the purposes that I just outlined, under circumstances where those names were never to be revealed to him? He wouldn't know who gave up the money. Now, whether or not Dana turned over that list to him, I can't say.

Fry: Who wanted him to get off the ticket?

Adams: You can get that information out of the papers better than I can tell you. All I know about it is what I read in the papers. The only firsthand information I have about getting off the ticket is what Bill Knowland himself told me. Knowland was out in the Pacific someplace at that time, on vacation or otherwise, and he was told about this and came back. I know, from what Bill Knowland told me, that Knowland immediately located the Eisenhower train and got on the Eisenhower train. He stood up for Nixon and said, "It's no go. You leave him alone and he stays on the ticket." Knowland told that to General Eisenhower. That's the only firsthand information I have on that.

Fry: Do you have any firsthand information about Nixon's vice-presidential nomination and Ike's selection of him?

Adams: No, only what I've read. You mean the maneuvering that took place?

Fry: Yes. And at what point this was offered as a strong possibility.

Adams: No, I don't know.

Fry: There again, a lot of the books place it pretty early--like April, [1952].

Adams: I couldn't help you there.

Fry: He's never mentioned it?

Adams: No, and I've never asked him.

Earl Adams and the Republican Party

The Kuchel Campaigns

Fry: Am I missing something here that you were doing in other political areas at this time?

Adams: Lord, it's a long story. Yes, I was finance chairman for Tom Kuchel in 1954 when he ran for the short term for the United States Senate.

[end tape 1, side 1; begin tape 1, side 2]

Adams: I want to correct the above statement. In 1954 I was a member of Kuchel's finance committee. I was not chairman. And I think I was also a member of the lawyers' committee. Then in 1956 I was his Southern California campaign chairman when he ran for the long term.

Fry: Were you able to get money from roughly the same sources for Kuchel as you did for Nixon?

Adams: No, no. Oh, there was some overlapping. But no, there was a difference there in political philosophy between the two that would prompt you to go to different sources for your money.

Fry: Which was that Kuchel was more--

Adams: Kuchel was a little more liberal, I would say, than Nixon.

Fry: So did you get more Democratic money for Kuchel?

Adams: I would think so.

Fry: Or am I dividing it up the wrong way?

Adams: No, I would answer that question that I think so, without being able to give you what the impact was. But I would think so, yes.

Fry: That's what I mean, because you probably didn't think in terms of party. You were thinking more in terms of people who would be interested in Kuchel.

Adams: It was easier to get a Democratic committee for Kuchel than it was to get a Democratic ticket for Nixon at that time; let me put it that way.

Fry: There was so much antagonism, as the majority of state support shifted from the Earl Warren era to what we'll call the Nixon era, between Warren and the oil companies--especially the independent oil companies--that I would expect you to have had a lot of good luck in getting funds from Keck's and all of those.

Adams: I don't know. I can't remember. My recollection of getting money is that it was always hard, regardless who the candidate was. You were lucky if you got a large contribution, and they came in only occasionally and few and far between. So I couldn't say with regard to Kuchel that it was easier to get money from oil companies or harder to get money from them. I don't remember. I know it was hard--I can put it that way—at all times.

Fry: It's really hard to tell from the records, because the records then were only those that contributed to groups formed for the candidate. It's hard to know what really went to the candidate. I think that what happens is that we got a distorted view of who was supporting the candidate, because the law only required reports to be made on just that one type of contribution.

Adams: Nixon had widespread support. Kuchel had widespread support. Both of them were well liked.

Fry: To get elected they both had to have some Democratic support.

Adams: Well, you do in California. To be elected in California, because of the over-preponderance of Democrat registration as against Republican, I'd say a Republican should get at least 85 percent of the vote of his own party and not less than 25 percent of the Democratic party's vote to be elected. I don't see how you can get in otherwise.

Now, with the Democrats it would work the other way because of their heavy registration. If a Democrat can get 65 or 67 percent of the vote of his own party and 10 percent of the Republican party, he's in. So you can see how it's much easier for the Democrats than it is for the Republicans.

Fry: I'm about to move on. Did you want to say any more on that subject?

Adams: You asked me what intervened, and I was saying that in 1956 I was Tom Kuchel's campaign chairman here, and he was re-elected. In 1958, when Bill Knowland ran, I was his Southern California chairman also.

The Big Switch: An Insider's View

Fry: I'd just like to ask that one question that you must have been asked three hundred times. Why did Knowland choose not to go on in the Senate in 1958 and to run for governor of California instead?

Adams: What I am going to say is based upon my surmise of the situation, which may not be correct. There were two men in this state--Ed Shattuck and Phil Davis--who were strong persons in the Republican structure here at that time. They were very close to and very fond of Knowland, and he was very fond of them. I think that they felt there was a chance, because of Knowland's prestige in the United States Senate and the name he had made for himself, that they could bring him into California and elect him governor of the state of California. That was their feeling out here.

From Knowland's viewpoint, he had been back in Washington for some time and I think he wasn't adverse at all to the idea of coming back to California and being governor if he could.

Fry: Why would Shattuck and Davis have wanted him governor instead of senator, when he was the leader in the Senate?

Adams: Don't you think that two people that are politically ambitious for a position within the party feel that they are doing much more for themselves if they are close to the governor of a big state like the state of California, than they are close to a United States Senator who is 'way away in Washington? I'd say the governor of the state of California is more influential, and could be politically, maybe, a better stepping-stone to a higher position than going from the Senate.

Fry: Do you think it would have been a better base for the presidency?

Adams: Yes, I think so. But then of course, on the other hand, you can see how things work out. In my opinion if [Robert] Taft had been nominated and elected president of the United States instead of Eisenhower, Bill Knowland would have been his vice-president. With Taft dying, Bill Knowland would have ended up president of the United States! So you see how things work out.

So Bill Knowland coming back here was a combination of those men intriguing him to do so, and maybe his and his wife and family's desire to have him back in California.

Fry: Knight wasn't happy with this, was he?

Adams: No, because to promote Knowland they had to shove Knight out, which was one of the things that helped bring about a defeat. In my opinion it would have been more astute from a political standpoint if, instead of bringing him back into the state of California the way they did--which in effect was having him fly out here and say, "Here, people, is Bill Knowland, and we want him to be governor of the state of California"--they had started an early program throughout the state to have meetings in San Diego of important groups, called for another purpose other than to talk about Knowland. Then they could have had important people suggest that maybe we ought to consider having Knowland come out here and survey the situation, and have a talk with Knight and see who was going to run for governor. Do the same thing in Los Angeles, Bakersfield, San Francisco, and throughout the state, where the movement would look as though it were a grass roots movement for a consultation between Knight and Knowland as to who was going to be the candidate, which would lead up then to a conclusion that nobody came in here and shoved Knight out abruptly--if you follow me on my line of thinking?

Fry: Sure I do.

In fact, Knowland and I had a series of interviews.* We were going through the history of the Republican party, year by year, when he died. We hadn't gotten up to 1958 yet.

But that was generally what you would expect to have happen, a very careful laying of groundwork before you announce that the candidate's going to run.

Adams: [interrupting] You're saying it better than I did. That's what should have been done in my judgment.

Fry: My question is why was it done so precipitously and so maladroitly, when such matters had not been handled like that in the past by the Republicans?

Adams: I don't know. It could be overestimation of his prestige, of his power, of his political wallop. I don't know.

Then, of course, he was interested intrinsically and constitutionally in the right-to-work law. He believed in it. He believed that in a country such as ours, where you're supposed to have the greatest expanse of liberty and freedom, that a man should not be compelled to join a labor union as a condition precedent to working, to making a living.

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*See interview with William F. Knowland in: Earl Warren's Campaigns, Volume II, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1977.

Adams: I don't know how anyone who knows anything about freedom--freedom of choice, freedom of selection, and freedom under our constitution--can disagree with that as a legal proposition. Now, unionists and other people might disagree with it as a matter of economics, as a matter of survival, that you've got to have labor unions in order to protect the laboring man from the power of the employer. I can understand that, too. But I'm talking now about laws. I can see no justification, from the viewpoint of a lawyer, why a man should be compelled to join a labor union as a condition precedent to earning a livelihood. That to me is servitude.

Fry: Nixon came out on behalf of Knowland on that.

Adams: He supported Knowland.

Fry: But I think on a national scale Nixon was not supporting right-to-work.

Adams: No. He supported Knowland. Now, whether he supported Knowland by saying, "I'm in favor of right-to-work," I can't say. I don't remember. But I know he supported Knowland. Knowland liked Nixon and I think Nixon liked Knowland.

Fry: At what point did you come into Knowland's 1958 campaign?

Adams: From the beginning. I was his Southern California chairman, under the state chairman.

Fry: You mean when Knowland first decided to run for governor?

Adams: When he made the decision to come in here, I played no part in that decision at all. That had been made before I came into it. He called me one day by telephone, after he had made the decision, and said he wanted to see me. I went to see him, or he came to see me, I can't remember which. I said yes, I would be glad to be his chairman, which I was.

Adams's Political Philosophy

Fry: This is a good place for you to explain for the record where you were in your political philosophy along the continuum of Republicanism.

Adams: Oh, I'm a conservative.

Fry: Among the conservatives, where are you?

Adams: Oh, you're getting to a fine degree. I would say that on fiscal matters, on the matter of international relations--things of that kind--I'm ultra conservative. When it comes down to human rights and things of that kind, I would be considered more of a liberal conservative.

Let me illustrate. If I were president of the United States, and a kingmaker in addition to being president, and could do the things that I wanted to do, one of the first things that I would want to do would be to clean up the living conditions of the coal miners of the East. I would want to see them have decent homes to live in.

Fry: With federal funds?

Adams: I don't care how it would be done. I think human beings are entitled to--a man that digs coal all day in a mine and comes up, I want him to go home to a respectable home with good sanitary conditions and good living conditions, and a chance to earn a little money, save a little money, and educate his family and improve the living conditions of himself and his family. Now, whether that's a liberal or a conservative, I don't know. I don't know what it is, but I'm trying to tell you how I would approach things.

Fry: It's straight out of John L. Lewis.

Adams: Now, on this business of labor unions calling strikes right before Christmas time or right before the holidays and paralyzing the transportation systems and paralyzing the economic system--no. I'm opposed to that sort of thing. So I don't know what I am. I mean I don't know what I am when I give you those examples. You decide for yourself what you think I am.

To me, two times two makes four. Rhetoric won't change it. The New Deal, The Fair Deal, The New Frontier--all of that is just hogwash. It's a lot of rhetoric, builds pies in the sky for people, gets their hopes and ambitions way up, and they're never satisfied. I mean the goals are never met. I'd rather be like Mr. [Gerald R.] Ford is acting today as president. Whether his programs are sound financially or not, I can't say. But he is at least trying to be frank, not using high-sounding phrases and promising the people everything, and salvation right away. I like that sort of thing.

I'm convinced of the fact that this country can't survive--any more than this office can survive or any more than you can survive in your own home--if you continue, year after year, to spend more money than you take in. You're going to go bankrupt

Adams: someday. So I'm against all of that, too. I have never been able to convince myself that all--I read someplace the other day that over $100 billion, not million, have been spent in the last thirty years to improve the poverty conditions and whatnot of the people of this country, and they're worse off today than when these started. I ask you, what have we gotten from all of these programs?

Mr. Roosevelt was talking about there being seventeen million people going to bed every night ill housed, ill clothed, and ill fed. After the four terms that he was in there, with all the money that was spent, Kennedy came into office in 1960 saying there was twenty-one million people still ill clothed, illy fed, and ill housed. Now, you put all that together and tell me what have we got for what has been spent?

Fry: I don't know, but if Bob Finch or Ronald Reagan don't run for president next year, I think you should consider it. [laughs]

Adams: [laughs] I would probably get two votes, mine and my wife's. And I have some doubt about her!

Richard Nixon: 1960-1968

The Decision Not to Contest 1960 Election Results

Adams: Now, getting back to Nixon. Nixon then ran for the presidency against Kennedy in 1960. I played no official part in that. I worked in a minor way in the Nixon-Kennedy campaign of 1960, but not in any important way that's worth mentioning at all.

Fry: Was that just finance again?

Adams: I think it was, yes. I didn't have any decision or strategy-making authority of any kind in that campaign.

Fry: After 1961 Nixon came to work here at Adams, Duque & Hazeltine, right?

Adams: Yes.

Fry: Can you tell me how that came about?

Adams: He ran in 1960. He was defeated by Kennedy. He didn't come here in 1960. In December of 1960, the month following the election, I got a telephone call from Bob Finch, who was then the administrative assistant for Nixon, and he said that Nixon wanted

Adams: to talk to me, and would I come back to Washington. I said I would and I did. I went back there and met him, and when I walked into his office, he said to me, "How are you?"--which he generally says to you when he first sees you.

I said, "It isn't important as to how I am. The important question is how are you?"

He said, "What do you mean by that?"

I said, "Well, I've been reading in the newspapers what happened in the election, and from what I can gain--what I hear--it looks to me like in two states, particularly Illinois and Texas, you were badly treated and the ballot boxes were stuffed, burned, and other things happened to the extent that I think that if you raised the question about the voting--had an investigation made--you might find that you were really, in effect, elected president instead of Kennedy."

Nixon said, "I've been told that by other people. I've thought a great deal about it."

I said, "What are you going to do?"

He said, "I'm going to do nothing."

I said, "Why?"

He started out by saying, "If I contest the election, then everything President Kennedy does in the interim will be a de facto act," if you understand what I mean by de facto, as compared with de jure. It would be a questionable act. "And he will be a de facto president until this is determined. I have determined that it is by far more important that the people of the United States and the people of the world understand in America we have de jure government rather than de facto government, than it is that Richard Nixon be president of the United States." That's the statement he made to me.

Fry: In other words, he was concerned about how this would look in other countries?

Adams: Not only that, but he was concerned about what effect it would have upon our administration. Because everything that the then-incumbent president was doing would be a questionable act until the matter was determined. And if, in the final determination of it, it was found that he had been elected instead of Kennedy, then everything Kennedy had done while in office would be a de facto action.

Fry: Did you think that he could have asked for recounts and challenged these elections and have it all finished within a year, maybe?

Adams: Oh, I don't know. You can't tell in this country, with all the appeals and everything that you can take in various matters, how long a thing of that kind would endure. But anyway, he wiped it out.

Adams, Duque & Hazeltine

Adams: Then he said, "I am thinking about coming out to California to practice law. Do you think I should settle in Los Angeles or should I settle in San Francisco?"

I said, "By all means, I think it should be in Los Angeles. You were born in Southern California. You were reared in Southern California. You were elected a congressman from Southern California. Your base of voting strength and power in connection with your election to the United States Senate and so on arose out of Southern California. You're known there. You go to San Francisco and you're breaking into a new area. Sure, they know you, but it isn't your home town, in your home territory. It should be Southern California."

He said, "I think maybe you're right. Well, I'm coming out, and I'd like to get from you your suggestion of a list of firms that you think I might be interested in, or who might be interested in me." I did that. I think I gave him a list of five or six firms, and I put ours on the list.

So he came out. I was never with him at all when he visited or was interviewed by or interviewed any of the other firms. On one occasion when he was in Los Angeles and over at the Statler Hotel, I took my partner, Henry Duque, and my other partner, Herbert Hazeltine, with me over there. We met with him and talked about the various law firms and told him that we were interested in having him join us if he felt that he wanted to do so. Nothing more was said.

Shortly after that the Republican State Central Committee met in Sacramento. I went up to that meeting. I was a member of its executive committee at that time. And of course he was there. On the last day of the state central committee meeting, late in the afternoon, Bob Finch called my hotel, asking when I was going back to Los Angeles. I told him and he said, "Do you mind if Dick Nixon rides back with you?"

Adams: I said, "Of course not. It would be wonderful."

We both got on the plane together, sat in a seat together, and on the way down he said, "I've decided to come into your firm." That was on a Saturday, and on the following Monday morning he was here.

Fry: Was Nixon in a position at this time to be able to feel assured that he would be offered a position in any of these selected firms? Was it mainly just his job to make up his mind?

Adams: Yes. I would say that anybody that had the national and international reputation that he had at that time could be reasonably certain in his own mind that he wouldn't have any trouble making a connection in Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, Philadelphia--any place in the United States.

Fry: So he came here.

Adams: When the office opened Monday morning he was here, with all the reporters in Los Angeles, and I thought from all over the world, out in the hall taking pictures and everything else.

Fry: Someone--it might have been Mr. Lloyd Dinkelspiel in San Francisco--said he thought that here your firm was where Nixon got a lot of his "post-graduate schooling" in foreign affairs. Didn't he do a lot of representing of the firm in other countries?

Adams: No, not a great deal when he was here. I think Lloyd was thinking more of when he went to New York.* That's where he began to get his big cases that involved international complexities and problems. No, I think Lloyd was thinking of New York, not Los Angeles, because I don't believe that anyone that has an international problem of some kind that requires the assistance of a lawyer is going to come to Los Angeles for it. He's going to go to New York or Washington.

Fry: I thought maybe Los Angeles firms had a lot to do westward, toward Asia?

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*In the spring of 1963 Richard Nixon joined the New York firm Mudge, Stern, Baldwin, and Todd (later Nixon, Mudge, Rose, Guthrie & Alexander; later Nixon, Mudge, Rose, Guthrie, Alexander & Mitchell).--ed.

Adams: I don't think so. There wasn't a great deal--at least while he was here there wasn't a great deal of that. He had some important pieces of business come here because of his presence in the office, but I don't recall any of it being international. I do know that after he went to New York and joined the Mudge firm, I think he increased their business by over $1 million the first year he was there.

Fry: That's paying your own way, isn't it?

Adams: Yes. Yes, because right then and there the international business began to come in to him, which he was ideally suited for.

Fry: I'm sure he didn't have much trouble getting appointments in foreign offices.

Adams: None whatsoever. That was his big forte. Now, there are a lot of fine international lawyers and firms that could do a fine piece of business for you. But if you had a problem in France that you wanted to get solved as expeditiously as possible, it might take them three or four weeks or a month to make the proper connection. Nixon could pick up the telephone and get hold of President De Gaulle in probably an hour, and say, "I've got a problem. I'd like to meet with you. How soon can I see you? Can I see you tomorrow or can I see you the next day?" And he'd be in.

Fry: Here in your office, what were his main cases?

Adams: His main work here was working in consultation with things that we wanted his help on, and also in supervising and consulting in connection with pieces of business that he brought in. He wasn't a detail lawyer that would sit down and take a probate file and spend a whole day and a half going through the thing, picking out little pieces of history here and a little fact over there so that he could get a composite idea of what was going on. He'd like to take the thing after somebody had done that and take the big, bold sweeps of the thing, be in on the ultimate decisions and the ultimate conclusions.

Fry: Was he put in a position of negotiation, then, in some of these cases?

Adams: Oh, yes. And he turned a lot of very important cases down. I want to say that to his credit too. I can think of one case, one piece of business, that was offered us because of his being here. It was in early 1962. The fees would have been in the millions because the case would require a sizeable staff and would go on

Adams: for years. Nixon talked to me one day and said he had decided not to take it--that somewhere along the way it might involve a government agency and he, as former vice-president, could not in good conscience be a part of anything that might remotely appear to be a conflict of interest.

[end tape 1, side 2; begin tape 2, side 1]

Defeat in 1962: An Anlysis

Fry: What about in 1962, when he ran for governor?

Adams: In 1962, when he ran for governor, I played no official part in it, because in that year I was again Tom Kuchel's campaign chairman for re-election. I talked with Mr. Nixon about it, and he said, "No, I'd rather have you stay. You can do me more good by staying there and working for Tom Kuchel's election than you can by getting into my campaign."

Nixon was very late [September 27, 1961] in making a public announcement of his final decision. He had made statements earlier that were not definite as to whether he was or was not going to be a candidate, all of which led other people, such as Joe Shell and Butch [Harold J.] Powers, a former lieutenant governor, to believe that there was a possibility that Nixon would not be a candidate. Both those men, then, announced that they were going to be candidates for the Republican nomination, set up their own organizations--had their own campaign committees organized throughout the state and funds were raised and whatnot--and went into the primary campaign.

Then Nixon announced that he was going to be a candidate. Now, that turned away from Nixon a lot of the Shell votes that he, Nixon, would otherwise have received in the runoff with Brown. Nixon did get the nomination in the primary. He was beaten by Brown by--I don't know--a couple of hundred thousand votes. Joe Shell polled over 700,000 votes in the primary.*

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*Results of the 1962 primary race for governor were:

	Democratic	Republican
Brown	1,739,792	5,236 (write-in)
Nixon	35,883 (write-in)	1,285,151
Shell	66,712 (write-in)	656,542

General election results were:

Brown	3,037,109
Nixon	2,740,351

--Handbook, California Legislature, 1963, Regular Session

Fry: A pretty big hunk.

Adams: So you see, he lost the Shell vote--or a large portion of the Shell vote--and thereby was defeated by Brown. If he'd have gotten the Shell vote, or two-thirds of the Shell vote, he would have beaten Brown. So I think his late announcement brought about his defeat.

Fry: Why do you think he felt so ambivalent? Was he considering continuing working here?

Adams: I don't know. This again is a surmise on my part. I'm not sure that his family, particularly his wife, Pat, wanted him to run for governor. I think he had a problem there at home, to satisfy her that it was a thing, maybe, that he should do. That persuasion didn't bring about a decision until late in the campaign. He hasn't told me that, but that's my guess.

Fry: As a television watcher, I remember that Pat Nixon really took it hard when he lost.

Adams: Oh, yes. So did he.

Fry: I wondered if that had something to do with her attitude?

Adams: I think he wanted to run for governor with her blessing, and I think it took some persuasion, and finally perhaps a reluctant "yes." It came late, and I think that hurt him immensely. Oh, I know that if he hadn't had the opposition of Shell in the primary, which always causes some bloodletting, that he would have gotten the Shell vote and he would have beaten Brown by two or three hundred thousand votes.

Fry: In the general election.

Adams: Why, sure, because there's bloodletting when you have that primary. He has to say things about Shell, and Shell has to say things about him. That results in a division. If he hadn't had that opposition, why, all of that Shell vote would have gone to him.

Fry: I was just reading that in some book--it may have been Frank Mankiewitz's latest book, Perfectly Clear. The writer mentioned that some of the Shell vote actually went to Brown, and I couldn't understand this because the philosophies were so far apart.

Adams: Well, it could have been. You see, you hurt peoples' feelings and they don't follow their party then. They're angry about something, and they're spiteful, and they're dissatisfied. So they'll do that. Oh, I don't think there's any question but what some of the Shell vote went to Brown. It had to, for Brown to be elected. Anyway, I think that's the reason that he didn't beat Brown.

Fry: Was there a problem of lack of money because of Shell?

Adams: No, I don't think so. A candidate will always tell you there's a lack of money, so--no, I don't think so. I think they all spend too much.

Fry: Were there any differences in this campaign between your kind of conservatism, which you were explaining to me awhile ago, and some of Nixon's stands, so that you had to sort of keep your mouth closed?

Adams: He came out and attacked the John Birch Society, which I would never have done. If he had asked me, I would have said no. Now, I'm not a John Birch Society man. I wouldn't belong to it. I don't believe in those kind of things. But I don't believe in attacking a society that stands for--if everything the John Birch Society wanted was put into play, it wouldn't harm this country any. They were condemned principally because a man by the name of Welch said something disparaging about General Eisenhower. I would have disagreed with Nixon on that. I would have said, "Leave the John Birch Society alone. You've got nothing to gain by doing that."

My father used to tell me, "As you go through life, don't buy problems. You can get them for nothing." So why create a problem for yourself?

Fry: This further alienated him from people following Shell?

Adams: That's right, it did. It hurt him immensely.

Nixon as Attorney: The Move to New York

Fry: So instead of coming back here to your law firm then, he went to New York?

Adams: No, he stayed in Los Angeles. He didn't go to New York until March or April of 1963.

Fry: What at that point did he want his base to be New York?

Adams: He talked about the thing several times, and I said to him on several occasions, selfishly, "I'd like to have you stay here." We liked him. He was an easy man to get along with. He was a good listener. For a man in the high positions that he had held, he was one of the best listeners that I have <u>ever</u> come in contact with.

Adams: Most people in those high positions want to do all the talking. He likes to do all the listening. He would always cross his legs--he's in a great habit of crossing his legs--and he'd cup his chin in his hand like that [demonstrates] and listen. He was a very attentive listener and had a very retentive mind. He was a very amiable fellow to be with, and was never in your way, never threw his weight around to assume a position of importance at all.

So all of us would have liked to have him stay here. But I said to him on several occasions, "Dick, I think that your strong forte is in international law. You've got a great international background. You've had a great deal of experience. You have access to all the capitols of the world. I think that's where you should be. I hate to say it, but I don't think that you can be an international lawyer and practice in Los Angeles. I think you have to go to New York or you have to go to Washington. That's where the clients will go for international lawyers, not out here." So he ultimately went to the Mudge firm in New York. As I said, I believe he increased the income of that firm by over $1 million the first year.

Fry: How did he make contact there, or did he have to?

Adams: He made it himself. One of his very dear friends was Mr. [Elmer H.] Bobst, who was the head of Warner-Lambert Pharmaceutical Company. He was an elderly gentleman, and a very close friend of Richard Nixon. I think it was through Bobst that he was introduced to the Mudge firm, because Bobst was using the Mudge firm as counsel for his pharmaceutical company. I think that was his introduction to the Mudge firm.

Fry: When he left to go work for Mudge, did you feel that he did not see this as the way to spend the rest of his days, but that he still had this feeling that he wanted to be president?

Adams: Yes, but I think it was an ambivalent feeling. He was feeling his way through. He wasn't sure that at that time he could demonstrate enough power between that time and the election in 1968 to put himself up so he could lead the Republican ticket. I would say that I think he had it in mind. But he also had in mind the necessity for him to establish a firm base as a practicing lawyer in New York and accumulate something for his family. I think he had that in mind too. But I don't think he had completely cast out of his mind the possibility of running for president.

Fry: Was New York a better base than California for running for president if he ever wanted to?

Adams: No. I think New York would be all right if you had the background and the foundation there, which he didn't have. His foundation and background was California. California is just as good as New York, with the great voting power that we have here, the electoral vote that we have.

Fry: So it was mainly, then, that it would give him a better position in the practice of law?

Adams: Yes, and a bigger exposure, a more important exposure. Instead of being a provincial lawyer in the city of Los Angeles, he'd be one of international repute.

Fry: In summaries and evaluations of Nixon's presidential administration, he comes out very well in his foreign relations.

Adams: Yes. Oh, I think he comes out excellently in his foreign relations. At least it looks that way now. You never can tell how these detentes and things are going to work out. I think he comes out very well there, and I think on the whole he comes out on domestic matters on as high a level as any of the other presidents we've ever had. Up until the time his Watergate thing came along I would say he had a record that was just as good as any of them. I think that's where the floundering took place.

Fry: Can you make any specific connections between his experiences with Mudge and his later decisions and efforts in foreign policy? For instance, his efforts at detente--do you know a specific connection?

Adams: No.

Fry: What about his overtures to mainland China?

Adams: No, I can't help you on that.

The 1968 Presidential Campaign

Adams is Appointed Los Angeles County Chairman

Fry: Didn't you tell me that you worked for him in 1968?

Adams: I was Los Angeles County chairman for him in 1968.

Fry: Were you in on his decision to run?

Adams: No. I just ran the campaign for him in Los Angeles County, following the overall pattern that had been laid down by the strategy group in Washington.

Fry: At what point did you enter, and how?

Adams: Right at the beginning.

Fry: What happened? Did he just call you from New York?

Adams: Bob Finch called me or talked to me. I can't remember which. I said to Bob that what I wanted was more than Bob Finch's request that I be Nixon's chairman here. I wanted him to go back and talk to Nixon and have Nixon tell him that he did or did not want me to be the chairman. If he came back and reported that he talked to Nixon and Nixon said yes, I would take it.

Fry: You weren't sure that this was Nixon's idea?

Adams: No, I was not. You're never sure.

Fry: This was to be chairman of Southern California?

Adams: Chairman of Los Angeles County and then to branch out to Southern California. But I did still want to keep on as chairman of Los Angeles County, because that's really Southern California. You control the whole operation from there.

Finch called me back and said that he had talked to Nixon, and Nixon had said that yes, by all means, that was what he wanted me to do. So I opened a headquarters immediately out there on Wilshire Boulevard. I also wrote to Tom Kuchel, who was up for re-election for the U.S. Senate, and told him that in the event he was planning for me to work for him, I would not be able to because I had agreed to work for Nixon.

Fry: Murray Chotiner was in on this one, wasn't he?

Adams: Not in California. He may have been back in Washington, but he never was here.

Fry: Who were your main people out here?

Adams: You mean that helped me in the campaign? It would be Jack Drown, who was the husband of Helene Drown, who is a very close friend of Mrs. Nixon. They were roommates in college, and I guess you've seen her name connected with Mrs. Nixon quite often. Ray Arbuthnot--he's an orange grower at La Verne and an old early Nixon supporter. He got in with Nixon in the senatorial campaign of 1950 and stayed

Adams: with him all the way through the other campaigns. Waller Taylor here in the office also helped. Oh, and there was a scad of people that were put on the payroll. But I'm thinking of the main volunteers. Those people were all volunteers working with no compensation, as was my case.

Financing the Campaign

Adams: You asked me about the campaign and who was there, and I have told you.

Fry: You've said Jack Drown and Ray Arbuthnot were working in the campaign.

Adams: Yes, and Waller Taylor.

Fry: Was there anyone else?

Adams: They were the important ones. Jeb Magruder was there, but only for the early portion of the campaign.

Fry: Who was in charge of finance?

Adams: If I remember, Maurice Stans had worked out an overall program by which all the money that was collected went back to him. Then he reparcelled it out to the various states as he thought was necessary for a successful operation. So when we wanted money I had to get hold of him, or get hold of [Herbert] Kalmbach, who was working for Stans at that time, and tell him that I needed money.

It was not a satisfactory arrangement at all, because there were long periods of time when we didn't have any money, although they raised $3 million or $4 million or more right out of Los Angeles County. We were out of money a lot of times--times when I didn't even have literature. One time I had to call Clem Stone in Chicago and ask him if he'd send out some of his literature because I didn't have any money to get any, or any money to function, so Stone did send out some of his literature. So it was a very unsatisfactory arrangement.

I don't know whether Asa Call told you or not, but he was instrumental in raising a lot of money here. Finally we decided the hell with it; we are just going to raise the money and keep what we need to run our campaign, and if they don't like it it's just too bad, which we did.

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Adams: Then I had also the celebrated Jeb Magruder. I was away for two weeks on business, and when I came back he was on the staff. I think he was hired by Walter Taylor, but I'm not sure. But I didn't care who he was hired by. I canned him. He was no good, in my opinion. He wasn't satisfactory; let me put it that way.

Fry: Did you know him beforehand?

Adams: No.

Fry: You mean just things he suggested?

Adams: Oh, I asked him what his political experience was, and he said he had handled Governor [Richard Buell] Ogilvie's campaign back in Illinois. When I called back there to get a verification of that, they said they'd have to look it up, and they did. I didn't talk to the governor himself. I talked to somebody in his office. They looked it up and called back and said that no, he hadn't been in Governor Ogilvie's campaign at all. He'd been the chairman of an indistinct, unimportant precinct. So I didn't like that.

Another thing I didn't like was that he was full of ideas, charts, programs. Everything was on a chart. He was going to chart everything. I'm not much on that, because I don't think that gets you any votes. The way to help a candidate is to get out and work. You've got to be a worker in the vineyard. You can't be sticking around an office doing a lot of chart-drawing. He was a well dressed, fine looking fellow, always having a bunch of women in there, lecturing to them on these charts, and that sort of thing.

Then he was strong for a club organization. You organize a club of eleven people for Nixon, and then each one of those eleven organize a club, and then each one of those organize a club, and each one of those organize a club. It's like taking one pea and multiplying it thirteen times. I said, "Well, Jeb, that doesn't go. If that succeeds you'll have everybody in the United States voting for Nixon. There won't be any votes for Humphrey. Nixon'll get them all, which I know isn't going to be the case. So let's forget it." Well, anyway, I guess I shouldn't be saying these things. But I let him go.

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Fry: That was pretty lucky for you that you did, though, don't you think?

Adams: I didn't know anything about what was going to happen later on in Watergate, but he just wasn't producing. I've got a law office here with fifty or sixty lawyers, and you've got to produce or the thing won't go. What I'm trying to say is, you learn from running these sort of things that you've got to have workers and producers around you.

Oh, he's a nice boy, and I know his father-in-law very well. He married a very fine girl from a very fine family. But it's just one of those things. That's nothing unusual in a campaign, to let people go. I didn't know he was going to get into this trouble, of course, that he did.

Adams: When the campaign was over we paid all of our debts, even those that came in late and were barred by the statute because they came in late [pounding table]. I filed a petition with the superior court up here to get permission to pay the bills. If I had paid them without that order, it would have been a misdemeanor! So we paid all of our legitimate bills and even those that came in after the statutory time for filing claims, and ended up with a surplus of $180,000 or $190,000. Most campaigns end up with deficits.

Fry: What do you do when you end up with a surplus?

Adams: Mr. Call kept it in an appropriate earmarked account for a good many years and earned interest on it. Then in the '72 campaign, when Ed Carter was heading up a big dinner here for Nixon to raise money, I think Call turned it over to him. Anyway, he can tell you that he got rid of it--turned it into the Nixon campaign of '72.

The Issues

Fry: What patterns of opposition did that '68 campaign take here in Los Angeles?

Adams: The pattern was the usual one. Remember what [Hubert] Humphrey's campaign was as contrasted with Nixon's campaign. Nixon's campaign was one of law and order--get crime off the streets.

Fry: That was during the anti-Vietnam riots, wasn't it?

Adams: Yes, I think so. Also he was for getting rid of somebody back there in office that nobody seemed to like in the Democratic party. I can't remember who.

Fry: A man?

Adams: Yes. Don't you remember, he said, "If I'm elected..." Or am I thinking of '72, when he was going to get rid of Ramsey Clark?

Well, there was nothing unusual about the campaign. There was Humphrey with his promises and philosophy, and Nixon with his. Humphrey, again, from the Democratic side, promising everything, and Nixon promising a lot, but a whole lot less than what Humphrey was promising.

Fry: Do you know who helped Nixon formulate the issues?

Adams: No. I would think it would be Finch and Chotiner, and I guess he had Haldeman with him at that time--that small group. There may have been others.

Fry: Was the Republican party pretty solidly behind him then, at that point?

Adams: Yes, I think so, in '68.

Fry: Both candidates were defending the Vietnam war at that point.

Adams: I know Nixon was. But Humphrey was too. I guess he had to be, because of Johnson. So that wasn't an issue, no.

Fry: What about getting out the vote in Los Angeles on election day? Did you have a big push for that?

Adams: Yes. There was an organization set up to do the best they could to get out the vote.

Fry: Was that mostly the Republican women?

Adams: Yes, the Republican women helped organize that.

Comments on Earl Warren, Nixon and Republican Solidarity

Fry: I have one other stock question, and that is can you give us any enlightenment on the relationship between Earl Warren and Nixon? Where did it first begin to chill, and why?

Adams: There again, you see, I'm just an outsider looking in. I was never privy to any conversations between the two at all. Starting with Earl Warren, I think he was a whale of a good governor. He was a good administrator. I think he ran a clean, honest office. But he was a man who wanted everyone to support him when he was running for office, but never wanted to give anyone else any help when the other fellow was running for office. It was all for Warren.

He also never wanted anyone to develop any political strength or power in the state of California while he had anything to do with California politics. As a consequence, if he saw anyone coming on up from the ranks and developing power, he would devise ways to cut the fellow down. That developed some friction between Nixon and Warren, because when Nixon became a congressman and then went from congressman to the United States Senate as a Senator from the state of California, Warren could see immediately a challenge to his

Adams: political prestige and power in the state of California. I think caused some reactions and feelings between the two that, in my opinion, brought about a not-too-kindly feeling between the two. Warren never went out of his way to help Nixon in any of his campaigns.

Fry: Nixon tried to get his support in the '50 race for Senator.

Adams: He never would help anyone. As a matter of fact, when Warren was running for governor he would never permit any other Republican candidate to appear on the same platform with him. Or, putting it another way, he would never appear at a meeting or on a platform where there was another Republican candidate. All right now, you can draw your own conclusions from that situation.

Fry: Yes, he always had his own Warren party. Was Nixon a pretty good party man? I read somewhere that one of the reasons that he decided to run at one point--it was in '62, because of the debacle in '58--was to attempt to reunify the Republican party in California.

Adams: Yes, to solidify the Republican party. That could have been. He was one of the best, I think, of the party regulars. He always supported a Republican candiate--always. And he went out of his way, at his own expense many a time, to put in a pitch for a fellow Republican candidate.

The Decision to Run and the Building of a Staff

Fry: What was his relationship then to Reagan as Reagan began to rise in the sixties? Did Nixon support him?

Adams: Oh, I think so. But then, of course, Reagan didn't come along for governor until 1966, and then he ran again in 1970. By that time, 1966, Nixon had been out of the state of California for three years or more, well established in New York, and was well on his way to setting up an organization to run for the presidency in 1968. You know, he had that in mind. I know that, because he called me one Sunday and wanted me to meet with him, which I did.

[end tape 2, side 1; begin tape 2, side 2]

Adams: It was sometime after he had left the office, when he was living back in New York. He was visiting in California and I think he called me on a Sunday, and we met here Monday. He came into the office, and he said, "I want you to draw up my mother's will, and I want you to be executor of her estate." Then he said something--I can't remember his exact words. "I'm doing this because I'm going

Adams: to be involved in something where I don't want to be required to give up any more time than is possible for anything that may happen in the event of my mother's death." I think he had very definitely made up his mind then that that was what he was going to go for, and he was trying to get his house in order. So I did that, and when his mother died I did act as executor of the estate.

Fry: At what point did he gather together this campaign staff?

Adams: I think he had probably gradually been getting that together, thninking about it. You see, it wasn't difficult for him to do, because he really just recruited people that had been with him since 1950.

Fry: He had a lot of the old hands there.

Adams: Oh, almost all of them. Nick Ruwe and all those fellow had all been with him--[H.R.] Haldeman and [John] Erlichman. Of course, they hadn't had important positions. They were just advance men in those early campaigns. Finch, and name after name, except Colson; I don't think Colson had been in on any of those early campaigns. Peter Flanigan, I guess, came in a little later. But they were mostly people who had been with him over the years, and they just continued with him.

Fry: When he called you, do you remember what year that was?

Adams: No, I don't. I'd have to get out the old files. It was sometime after he left here in 1963 and shortly before his mother died [1967]. It could be easily ascertained by looking at the date of death of his mother or the drafting of the will, which took place about that time.

Fry: Was his mother in pretty ill health?

Adams: No, she wasn't in ill health, but she was old and required attention. He made adequate provision for her. He was a very thoughtful child. He fixed the thing up so that, there again, automatically there would always be paid to his mother a monthly sum to keep her in the condition of comfort and good care. So if he were off in Europe someplace, or way off in Canada or in a remote portion of the United States, he didn't have to worry about seeing whether his mother was going to get taken care of. There was money to come to her every month. [telephone interruption] There's a lot of things that that boy doesn't get credit for.

Richard Nixon in Retrospect: Power and Public Office

Adams: I just don't understand what happened. But let me say to you that the Nixon I knew from the beginning, way back in 1946 and on through the years, and the Nixon that we all became intimately acquainted with while he was here--is not the Nixon that I read about on the Watergate tapes.

If something happened I don't know what it is. What I have to say is not directed at President Nixon, but is a general reflection with respect to those who hold high public office. I've often wondered if one of the curses of public life is the fact that the adulation, the patting on the back, the flattery, destroys a man's perspective. It makes him think that he's bigger than he is.

Fry: I guess that's a pretty heavy thing to go through.

Adams: Yes, it's heady wine. There's no question about it. Those in high office are told how wonderful they are, and the power they have. They don't believe it at first, but they hear it day after day from those sycophants that are around them, and finally they think, "Maybe there's some truth to that. I am a big man!"

That was one great attribute that Abraham Lincoln had. He never lost his sense of balance, his touch with people. He wanted to be considered--and was I think--a fellow who had the human touch about him, humility. I don't think at any time did he ever have a feeling of greatness or anything like that.

Fry: Do you think also that Nixon suffered from a creeping insularity?

Adams: If he did, that's bad. Anytime anyone pulls down the blinds so that he can't see what's going on outside, it's bad. And it's bad to let other people tell you what's going on, rather than ascertaining for yourself. You know full well that these sycophants who want to promote themselves are always going to give the boss the best end of the news, rather than the shocking portion of it. So it's not healthy.

Fry: You think maybe the change occurred after he became president in '68?

Adams: I never saw anything like that in him. I'd see him occasionally when I'd go to New York, after he left here and was with the Mudge office. I'd call him up and on occasions he'd ask me over to dinner, or we'd go out to dinner. Sometimes my wife was with me and we all four would go to dinner. He was the same old Nixon I

Adams: always knew, very human sort of a fellow. He'd walk down the street and look in shop windows with you. Quite a human being! He was the same when I visited him in the White House.

Fry: How is he now?

Adams: I haven't seen him since shortly before the Supreme Court decision came down. At that time he was happy and jovial. He didn't seem to be worried at all. I was worried, because I was afraid he was going to get slapped with the Supreme Court decision, which he did. I haven't seen him since then.

He called me the Sunday before Christmas [1974] on the telephone to wish me a Merry Christmas and all of that. We had a nice talk. His voice sounded good then and strong, and I said so. I asked him how he felt, and he said, "I'm weak, but I think I'm improving. After the first of the year Pat and I are going to begin seeing people. If you're down this way, drop in to see us." So I think he's improving, but I still think he hasn't regained all of his strength.

Fry: I certainly do thank you.

Adams: Not at all.

Transcriber: Judy Johnson
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Roy P. Crocker

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Roy P. Crocker

GATHERING SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SUPPORT FOR RICHARD NIXON IN THE 1950 SENATE RACE

An Interview Conducted by
Amelia R. Fry
in 1975

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INTERVIEW HISTORY--Roy P. Crocker

Date of Interview: February 20, 1975

Place of Interview: Mr. Crocker's Lincoln Savings and Loan, 630 West Sixth Street, Los Angeles

Those Present: Mr. Crocker and interviewer Amelia Fry

Roy P. Crocker was probably the most venerable of the interviewees whose recollections of Richard Nixon were recorded in this subseries. He moved slowly, he was hard of hearing, and he tired easily, but he had been one of the earliest discoverers of Nixon for the 1946 election, and before that, in 1943, he had been president of the Los Angeles County Republican Assembly. His role in the congressional and senate races of the young Whittier attorney was a crucial one that provided public and financial support initially from the banking and savings and loan community in California and later from agricultural interests.

This short interview provides the viewpoint of one who was close to and devoted to Richard Nixon in his years of rising power. In spite of the difficulties of interviewing, Crocker managed to record an affirmation of bits of other campaign narrations in the series and to fill in where "facts" are otherwise only implied. He showed the grit and determination in plowing through the interview session that he still showed in his daily life: every morning he continued to take his place at the helm of his large savings and loan enterprise. Such perserverance undoubtedly would have been an asset in his leadership in Nixon's campaigns, too.

On the morning of the interview, he provided the interviewer beforehand with an unaccustomed luxurious study table in the panelled and carpeted conference room of his building and had his scrapbooks of pictures and letters brought in. These suggested specific questions to be added to those from the campaign research and chronologies which the interviewer had brought along. We had agreed that we would not spend his energy and time in rehashing the 1946 campaign in which he was chairman of the executive committee and, informally, the finance chairman for the primary. Paul Bullock of UCLA had taped and transcribed a lengthy interview with him several years before on that first Nixon race. Crocker had also produced a concise three-page statement, "Roy P. Crocker's Relationship with President Nixon," on September 22, 1969, which is in the appendix of our interview. Crocker also permitted the photocopying and deposit of other letters from his scrapbook.

The session focussed on the 1950 senatorial campaign in which Richard Nixon defeated Los Angeles Congresswoman Helen Gahagan Douglas and thereby became a force in California to be reckoned with by the Earl Warren Republicans. Crocker, as valley organizer, helped provide Nixon with some of the most powerful support then available in California, that of the large landowners and agricultural interests, whose senators from Marysville to El Centro and the Imperial Valley controlled state finances and the legislature. Helen Douglas had chosen as the core of her campaign support of the 160-acre ownership limitation on farmlands fed with water from federal reclamation projects--a position that made Crocker's job even easier. The resulting drought in funds for Douglas's campaign may well have been a significant factor in her loss of votes to Nixon. In that case, Roy P. Crocker's role was probably more crucial than appears in campaign letterheads.

For the 1952 Republican convention, where Nixon's role in pushing Earl Warren's delegation into the Eisenhower camp needs careful documentation, the stock questions regarding Nixon and Warren were approached but soon followed a path into a comparative view of the 1946, '50, and '52 campaigns.

The session ended with lunch in the company cafeteria--where employees eat free of charge--then a short tour of Mr. Crocker's collection of historical documents, framed and hung in his office and spilling over into other offices. His small museum-archive was impressive: A George Washington letter and a rare picture; an unusual engraving of his organization's namesake, Abraham Lincoln; a signed original draft of an excerpt by Ralph Waldo Emerson, and another by Longfellow; and a letter from Thomas A. Edison. For sheer visual impact, the piece de resistance is an enormous government document with incredibly beautiful calligraphy signed by Napoleon Bonaparte. This was not all. In 1972, Crocker had presented a collection of pictures and letters of each U.S. president to Claremont's men's college, of which he was a trustee.

Almost two years after our interview, on New Year's Day of 1977, Mr. Crocker died at age 83 at his Palos Verde home. He had lived in Los Angeles since 1901, he had attended five Republican national conventions, and as far as this interviewer could judge, he still felt as he had after Nixon's first four years in the White House: that Nixon was a good president, and that he, like Crocker, was still basically a conservative.

Amelia R. Fry
Interviewer-Editor

13 August 1980
Washington, D.C.

I THE 1950 SENATORIAL RACE: NIXON vs. DOUGLAS

[Interview 1: February 20, 1975]
[begin tape 1, side 1]

Nixon's Campaign Style

Fry: I thought we might just warm up with your explaining to me what your previous experience in politics was, before your 1946 work for Nixon.

Crocker: I was active in the Los Angeles County Republican Assembly and became president of it. Then, I have been a delegate to four Republican national conventions starting with the one in 1952 when President Eisenhower was the candidate. At one time I was an alternate delegate, but four times I was full delegate.

Fry: I wonder if we could, at least for the moment, skip the 1946 work in that initial committee that launched Richard Nixon because we may be able to get, with your permission, the transcript of the interview that you did with Professor Paul Bullock at UCLA and use that; we wouldn't have to go over that ground again this morning.

Crocker: Yes, okay, fine.

Fry: And then we have that marvelous material that's in your scrapbook and we can include that.

We'll just jump right in, then, to Nixon's decision to run for the Senate in 1950. Then if we have any time left, we will go back and pick up earlier campaigns.

Nixon had won both the Democratic and Republican primaries in '48. I wondered who was wanting to oppose him in the primaries in '50. I have some names down here like Edward Arnold who was an actor, I think, and was considering running for the Senate. Do you remember that?

Crocker: I know of him, yes.

Fry: Frederick F. Houser and Los Angeles Councilman Raymond Darby. Those men were all interested in running.

Crocker: They were interested in running, but I don't think--when they realized what they would be up against if they ran against Richard Nixon, in my opinion they all reluctantly backed off.

Fry: They reluctantly did?

Crocker: Yes. I mean, they would have liked to, I think, run if he hadn't been the candidate.

Fry: Did they just automatically back off, or did somebody have to talk to them?

Crocker: I think they probably talked to some prominent Republicans in the district and got their advice--I'm quite certain they did--to confirm what they should or should not do.

Fry: Who were the prominent Republicans who were trying to get this organized?

Crocker: [Do you mean] from the standpoint of just lay Republicans or elected--I mean those that were in politics and holding political office?

Fry: Those holding political office. We'll take them first; those who wanted Nixon to run and wanted to clear the way for him.

Crocker: I think that the ones that were--like Roy Day who, while he only held a non-elective office, he and--and then there were men like Norris Poulson and others like myself that were hunting around trying to get some good candidate.

Fry: Presumably to run against Senator Sheridan Downey, right?

Crocker: Yes.

Fry: Did you talk to any political writers in the newspapers, like Kyle Palmer of the Los Angeles Times?

Crocker: I know some of the men involved, in trying to get a good candidate, did talk to Kyle Palmer. I can't remember whether I personally did, though I may have.

Fry: Kyle Palmer was favorable toward Nixon when Nixon was a congressman. Al least Nixon had the support of the Los Angeles Times. So I wondered if Palmer would have advised Nixon to tackle Downey at this point. Do you know?

Crocker: I think he would have been somewhat hesitant because, frankly, Downey--I think it was a general opinion that he wasn't way out to the left. He wasn't radical, in other words, a real radical candidate or politician. That was my memory.

Fry: So Palmer was a little cool toward the idea of Nixon going after Downey, then. Is that what you mean?

Crocker: That would be my impression.

Fry: If he was hesitant, were there other people who felt that running for the Senate might have been not a good idea, since Downey was already doing some things that the conservatives liked?

Crocker: Yes.

Fry: Who were the others who were pretty cool about this at the time? Do you know?

Crocker: I think Fred Houser--if it hadn't been for Nixon--I think he would have liked to run.

Fry: That's the judge, and former lieutenant governor, right?

Crocker: Yes—Judge Fred [F.] Houser.

Fry: So he naturally was cool.

Crocker: I don't think McIntyre Faries was at all interested [in running] because he had, prior to his judgeship, a very fine law business, and also he became a judge. He didn't like the idea, I think, of going back to Washington. That's my impression.

Fry: He was the Republican state chairman and he had headed the California Republican Assembly.

Crocker: But whenever you get that high up as a layman, then you have a lot of pressure to try to get you to run for public office, like governor or senator or something like that, [or] congressman.

Fry: Who talked this over with Nixon, to ask him to run? Or did he come to you?

Crocker: When he first ran for congress?

Fry: No, I'm still talking about 1950.

Crocker: In '50; still talking about then. Well, I think many of the leaders in the district, such as Roy Day and McIntyre Faries and even Kyle Palmer and so forth, and myself, wanted him to continue in public life and run for office, because we were pleased with the way he'd been handling himself in Congress, yes. We thought that he'd done such a good job that if the opportunity arose, we'd like to see him run for the Senate.

Fry: How did you feel about his manner of campaigning? Did you feel that was successful?

Crocker: Yes, I did. I thought it was very successful. He believed in these public meetings where they could ask questions and he could answer, though I think some of the questions were planted. He knew ahead of time probably what they would be. But he liked that approach. He was advised, and he did go over good in public, and he made a nice impression; whereas, if he just wrote an article and the people couldn't see him, no matter how well the article was prepared, it wasn't as impressive as seeing the man and hearing him. We felt that in any campaign that he ran, he needed to be exposed in person, because he did have sort of a dynamic way of speaking that was rather emphatic, and people liked that approach.

Press Support

Fry: You mentioned that Kyle Palmer probably talked to Nixon too. Later on, then, Kyle Palmer did come around. Did he come to support the idea of Nixon for Senate?

Crocker: As I remember, he did. A newspaperman like that always looks over who might be available and how good they would be, whether they're Republicans or Democrats. They're not always out just for one party. It depends on the philosophy of the man more than anything, I think, though at that time they [L.A. Times] would have preferred to have him a Republican.

Fry: What about the other newspapers around? Did they all seem to be supporting?

Crocker: To get back to the Times first, I think Norman Chandler and his father before him were very dedicated and strong Republicans and conservative in philosophy.

Crocker: Now, as to the other newspapers, the Examiner, being a Hearst paper, they weren't radical. They were moderately conservative. They weren't strongly, I would say, conservative. They were more moderate in their approach to politics and in the candidates they were willing to back, in my opinion.

Fry: I haven't read the files in the Examiner in Los Angeles, but the Examiner up north seemed to be pro-Nixon in its stories and editorials.

Crocker: I think the impression I got was the more they read his articles, they got to like his approach better and were willing to try to help him.

Fry: Did anybody go and talk to the Examiner to be sure Nixon would have Examiner support if he ran?

Crocker: There's another factor too that you've answered indirectly. Papers, if they know they're going to get enough advertising--political advertising that's paid for--they'll kind of lean your way, and that's just as they should. While they like to see someone who's friendly with the philosophy of the editors of the paper, still their main purpose is to make money for their publication, and they like to get political ads. In fact, they're soliciting political ads, naturally.

Fry: There were quite a few political ads in the San Francisco Examiner. Were you able to have enough money to supply these papers with the political ads for Nixon?

Crocker: At times we did have, and sometimes we didn't have so much.

Fundraising

Fry: When he was running for the Senate, were you pretty well-off financially in your funding?

Crocker: That was sort of nip and tuck as I remember. We didn't have a surplus of funds. We sort of lived hand-to-mouth because the higher the office you're running for, the more money it takes. When you run for the Senate, it takes much more money than for congress.

Fry: In terms of the newspapers, Manchester Boddy had a newspaper in Southern California. Was his newspaper at that time considered Democratic?

Crocker: I think he had some political ads in the paper from Democrats. I can't remember, very frankly.

Fry: This was the campaign where he entered the primary as a Democratic candidate against Helen Gahagan Douglas.

Crocker: Yes.

Fry: The interesting thing was that in the primary campaign, Downey used the same charges and the same issues against Helen Douglas that Nixon did in the general election campaign.

Crocker: As I remember, yes.

Fry: Was the primary kind of a dry run for the general election? Even though he was supposed to be a Democrat--you know, in California that wasn't too important then. So I'm trying to pin down whether Boddy was really a Democrat running against Helen Douglas or whether he was actually a Republican running against Helen Douglas. [interruption; tape off briefly] Boddy did seem to have some conservative connections and some conservative leanings in some of the issues.

Crocker: You mean as a supporter of Nixon, or as a possible candidate instead of Nixon?

Fry: No--well, maybe. He and Helen Douglas had a very bitter fight in the Democratic primary, and I wondered if at any time he had been considered as a possibility on the Nixon side.

Crocker: I think as long as Nixon had a hat in the ring, so to speak, and in other words is interested in running, that he would have had the preference of most of the Republicans in the district.

Fry: The other question about that would be, do you think some of the people who were supporting Nixon also supported Boddy in the primary, either with money or by working?

Crocker: A few may have. As you well know, some [Democratic] candidates can get money from different Republicans, even--some Republicans figure, "Well, if such-and-such a candidate doesn't win, maybe the other one will."

Fry: So they give money to both?

Crocker: They hedge their bets that way. [laughter]

Fry: The other interesting thing about Boddy came out about three years after the election was all over. That was that his paper was getting $250,000 a year from the Hearst Corporation because they were about to buy his paper and they wanted an option. Then Boddy also had a $2 million loan from a number of oil companies that were supposedly supporting Nixon too. So that was why I asked you that. It really fuzzes the lines.

Crocker: Yes. I didn't know much about that.

Fry: I don't think many people knew at the time. One of our questions is, what was Boddy's real role in this. [laughter] It's a little hard to distinguish.

Corcker: It is. From my standpoint, I can't help you.

Crocker Heads An Agricultural Committee for Nixon

Fry: One of the main issues in this campaign was a 160-acre limitation issue--federal water for agricultural land. I noticed that in your scrapbook, there's a mention in a letter from Nixon on December 29, 1949, that you were on the agriculture committee for Nixon, and he said you organized it. Was water one of the issues that you saw?

Crocker: I might put it this way: there are a lot of big ranches in California here. It would be uneconomical to break some of them up [to comply with the federal statute of a 160-acre limitation] because they specialize in certain activities. They need a lot of equipment for that, and the average small farmer can't afford that equipment. From that standpoint, it would be unscientific. I can tell you more if you want to get me off the record.

Fry: Why don't we go ahead and just let this take it down. Do you want me to make a note to put it under seal?

Crocker: No. But I was going to say, I graudated from Cornell University College of Agriculture. I was a farm adviser down in Imperial Valley, and I have a ranch. I was always regarded as an expert on ranching or farming. That was one reason why I handled the agricultural committee for Nixon.

Fry: Because you knew all of these big ranchers and everybody?

Crocker: Yes, I knew a lot of them.

Fry: There was a Democrat in Imperial Valley--who was that?--who, I think, crossed over and supported Nixon.

Crocker: Let's see. I had quite a few of them down here. I'd have to look at my files, in fact.

Fry: Yes, I'd have to review my notes on that, too. Did you talk to quite a few of them?

Crocker: You mean personally?

Fry: Personally, or what did you do to organize?

Crocker: I found out who was active down there and I generally phoned to them and talked to them on the phone.

Fry: On October 28, just before the election, a Mr. Vincent Spooner in Oakland announced that the Valley Farm News in Tulare, which was published by Alfred J. Elliott, a Democrat, had come out for Nixon. I wondered if that was something else that you had accomplished.

Crocker: Probably, yes.

Fry: Did a lot of his support come because of the 160-acre limitation, or was it really not that big of an issue?

Crocker: I don't think it was that big of an issue. It wasn't an important issue.

Fry: Was the Brannan Farm Plan important at that time?

Crocker: I can't remember whether it was so important then. I think most of the ranchers in California just wanted to be left alone by the government [laughter] and not be told what they could raise and how much they could raise and so forth.

Fry: And how much water they could get.

Crocker: Yes, yes.

Tidelands Oil

Fry: Another issue in the campaign was tidelands ownership. The question was, would the leasing of these tidelands to oil companies be controlled by the state or by the federal government. There seemed to be a desire to have the tidelands controlled by the state so that oil companies would lease from the state rather than the federal government.

Crocker: I think that was true, yes. Another reason too is that it's easier to get along with the state officials generally, from the standpoint--you don't have to run back from Washington. From the standpoint of your own personal contacts and friendships and all, it's more satisfactory, I think, to deal with state officials on the oil situation than to go back to Washington. Oftentimes they're not familiar with the problems out here.

Fry: On the campaign as a whole, there appears to be a fairly consistent pattern of support from Nixon among conservatives. But then also along about this time, there was a defection of some Republicans away from Earl Warren.

Crocker: Yes. That's right.

Fry: Do you remember that?

Crocker: Any man who's governor and has been in as long as Earl Warren had been in, he turns some applicants down for various jobs or various projects. You make enemies that you don't have when you go into an office fresh, before you've had a chance to offend a lot of people.

Fry: Warren had offended the doctors by putting in his state health insurance bills. Do you remember that?

Crocker: Yes.

Fry: Were you able to use some of these defected persons?

Crocker: As I remember, we had like a doctors-for-Nixon committee, although it may not show in my records. Oftentimes, like Roy Day or somebody like that would handle those kinds of things. I don't remember my handling it. I don't say I didn't work on it, but--

Fry: There were some attempts also to get Warren's endorsement of Nixon for this senatorial race. Warren refused to give it, I think.

Crocker: As I remember it. I'm not positive, but as I remember it.

More on Campaign Finance

Fry: I think before we go any further, we'd better explain exactly what your role was in the campaign so I'll know what kind of questions to ask.

Crocker: In his first campaign--

Fry: In 1950.

Crocker: I tried to raise money for the campaign--

[end tape 1, side 1; begin tape 1, side 2]

Crocker: [I tried] to get various types of organizations to endorse him, especially by getting the president or head of that organization--like the savings and loan industry. I was very well known in that and I tried to get various leaders in the industry here in California to support Nixon, and tried to set up a committee that would work for him, and also like for the ranchers and for the bankers and various other groups. Whereas, I think Roy Day tried to work with the news media--newspapers, magazines and various periodicals and publicity. That was the difference.

Fry: So where did you get your best campaign donations from?

Crocker: You mean from individuals or organizations?

Fry: I thought probably the larger donations would come from organizations.

Crocker: They mostly did, yes. To a large extent that's true. But then there was some individuals that put in fair sized amounts. I had a list of those who had contributed to other campaigns and I solicited frunds from them.

Fry: Was your list anything like Asa Call's list, or how did you and Asa Call fit in?

Crocker: Very much so. Very much like Asa Call's, yes.

Fry: He said he could raise enough money for a campaign in an hour and a half just by going down the list.

Crocker: Well, yes. My list was of the more moderate, modest givers, I think. He, as head of the Pacific Mutual Life Insurance Company, could call up certain friends of his and get very subsrantial sums from them, I think, whereas mine were more modest.

Fry: You were what, then, in your professional life?

Crocker: I was president of this savings and loan association at the time, and then I was active in the Republican party.

Fry: Why was Call's position in an insurance company something that afforded him contact with larger donors than your position?

Crocker: Socially, he went and had a lot of contacts with men of considerable means because he was head of the Pacific Mutual Life Insurance Company. He knew the large men who had very big financial interests, that had large amounts of life insurance. He knew them personally and could contact them for funds, for campaign funds, on a more personal basis than I could. And then he was very active, I think, out at the University of Southern California and knew a lot of well-to-do men that were supporting universities and colleges and so forth.

Fry: I gathered yesterday when I talked with him that he's still very involved with USC. I guess it's not clear to me whether Asa Call was able to pitch in helping with funding on this 1950 campaign or not.

Crocker: I would guess that he did.

Fry: Who were the individuals then who could give really big contributions? There are not many of those left, you know.

Crocker: No. He could tell you better than I can.

Fry: Would Preston Hotchkis be one?

Crocker: Yes, Pres Hotchkis. He was a pretty good money-raiser.

Fry: Was he a money-raiser for Nixon?

Crocker: My impression is, he helped.

Fry: He helped for Warren too.

Crocker: Yes, oh yes, yes. He'd be a good one to see, in fact.

Fry: There may be some other names that I can come up with to suggest. In Northern California there were certain members, certain people, that you could always count on to round up the basic funds to give you a base for campaign financing. I don't know who their equivalents are in Southern California.

Crocker: Now, as a rule, in most statewide political campaigns, they have a Northern California finance chairman and a Southern California finance chairman. The man up there would be some prominent citizen who had the contacts and could raise substantial sums up there in Northern California.

Fry: Was it done any differently in Northern California from Southern California?

Crocker: We all coordinated. The chairman of the state finance committee would have a Northern California chairman and maybe one for the San Joaquin Valley and maybe one in Los Angeles County or this area and one down maybe in San Diego.

Fry: Who was the coordinator in 1950.

Crocker: You mean from the finance standpoint?

Fry: From the finance standpoint for Nixon, yes.

Crocker: I don't know. I know I worked on it.

Campaign Strategies

Fry: [looking through file] Your scrapbook didn't have very much in it on 1950. What about Harold Morton and Mr. Keck and John Smith and Arnholdt Smith and that bunch? They were very prominent in '52 in the anti-Warren movement, so I wonder what they were doing in 1950.

Crocker: Arnholdt Smith--I never had any contacts with him, so I don't know how active he was. I couldn't help you on that.

Fry: They all worked together in '52 to form the rival anti-Warren delegation.

Crocker: Yes, that's right.

Fry: I wondered if they were important in backing Nixon in 1950. I suppose Arnholdt Smith was, because they were awfully close.

Crocker: Yes, I would imagine so, but I'm not positive. You'd have to ask some other source.

Fry: Do you know anything about the attempts to get Warren's endorsement of Nixon?

Crocker: Not very much, no. I didn't get in on that.

Fry: Murray Chotiner tells a story about sending young Republicans around in Helen Gahagan Douglas's campaign and having them ask her from the audience if she would endorse Jimmy Roosevelt, the idea being that once she would come out publicly for Roosevelt this would force Warren's hand to come out publicly for Nixon.* How does that sound to you?

Crocker: It might have been a strategy that Murray Chotiner tried to work out.

Fry: What was Murray Chotiner's role in this campaign? He's dead now, so we can't ask him.

Crocker: Yes. His strategy, I think, in nearly every political campaign that he was involved in, was just strategy, and also contact with the newspapers. Then he helped to write articles for publicity. He handled strategy and publicity--not exclusive, you know. He had to work with others, the campaign chairman or vice-chairman and things like that. But he worked more on contact with the papers and publicity and some strategy.

Fry: I see. Who did you coordinate your efforts with in the campaign structure?

Crocker: Whoever was the campaign manager, like with Roy Day or whoever was handling the publicity on the various campaigns. I worked with them that way. In a general, overall, broad statement, I worked more on trying to get men and women who could help on the campaign and get them working in the campaign and seeing that we had the proper publicity and that we had the men and women whose names meant a lot to the communities in which they lived, on the campaign committee, and to see that we were well financed.

Fry: Did you have anything to do with the "flying squadron," I think it was called.

Crocker: I didn't get into that, no. I didn't have much to do with that.

Fry: What was it? I believe there were several committees of women primarily, right? There seemed to be several of these committees, and I wondered what they did. Nixon's Flying Squadrons.

---

*Katcher, Leo, Earl Warren: A Political Biography (New York: McGraw Hill, 1967).

Crocker: I think it was this way: that, for example, if Jerry Voorhis or somebody else was going to speak, or anybody--any other candidate--and the committee thought it was important to have somebody there, they'd send somebody out to the meeting. They'd get up and ask some embarrassing questions of the candidate when the question-and-answer period came after the speech, and try to embarrass Jerry Voorhis or--

Fry: Or Helen Douglas in 1950?

Crocker: Or Helen Douglas, yes. And they were planted there just to embarrass the candidate.

Fry: And kind of throw them off guard?

Crocker: Yes, after, when the question and answer period [came] after the speech.

Fry: Did you get to take part any in any strategy sessions?

Crocker: When it came to agriculture or when it came to some savings and loan industry and so forth, yes.

Fry: By the way, was the Flying Squadron all women or men and women?

Crocker: They had both.

Fry: Your strategy sessions, then, were mostly where agriculture was concerned. Did you ever go with Nixon to speak in agricultural communities?

Crocker: No, but I would arrange ahead of time to see that there was somebody there to take care of it.

Fry: Were you able to work with the Associated Farmers or to get quite good campaign financing through Associated Farmers?

Crocker: No. I worked more with the farm bureaus. Some of the Associated Farmers were a little more liberal. The farm bureaus were--and the leading farmers in certain areas. I had a pretty good list of them at the time.

Fry: Did you do anything in publicity, in drawing up any of the campaign literature?

Crocker: Yes, I helped handle it, but I wasn't the chairman of it. They'd ask my suggestions on certain things.

Fry: Who was chairman of that?

Crocker: It started with Roy Day. He handled those things.

Fry: Yes. He was the printer.

Crocker: And he was in newspaper work.

Fry: Who invented or discovered Congressman Vito Marcantonio in this campaign? That was the congressman to whose voting record Helen Gahagan Douglas's was compared.

Crocker: Yes. I don't know.

Fry: I wondered how aware everyone in the campaign was of these basic strategies. As speakers went out, could they all pretty much hit the same types of issues and make the same types of charges? Was there coordination for that?

Crocker: Yes. Generally there was, yes.

Fry: This was in the days just as the Korean War was breaking out and Dick Nixon had just finished with the Hiss case. There was quite a bit of anti-Communism feeling.

Crocker: Very strong, in fact, yes.

Fry: So this was a very important part of the campaign too.

Crocker: Yes, yes it was.

Fry: You have to tell me how the "pink sheet" got started. It's become the most famous document from the whole campaign.

Crocker: [straining to hear] Which one?

Fry: The pink sheet. [pause] You don't know what that means?

Crocker: No, I don't.

Fry: I don't have a copy of it, but it was an election sheet about Helen Gahagan Douglas's record of voting with Vito Marcantonio. Somebody, it may have been Murray Chotiner--

Crocker: Roy Day ought to know about that.

Fry: Somebody had the great idea of using pink paper.

Crocker: Yes. I think Roy Day probably.

Fry: Did you have anything to do with running the speakers' bureau?

Crocker: Only as it pertained to agriculture, as a rule, and the savings and loan business.

Fry: After the campaign was over, there had been several reports about telephone calls that were made. Are you familiar with that?

Crocker: [straining to hear] About what?

Fry: Accusations about the Nixon forces making anonymous phone calls saying that Helen Douglas was a Communist and then hanging up.

Crocker: I don't know who. I didn't have anything to do with that, no. I don't know who.

Fry: Do you think it occurred?

Crocker: I think it hurt, yes. It hurt Helen Gahagan Douglas, yes.

Fry: Do you know anybody who would know about that whom I could ask? There are no documentary records of telephone calls. You just have to talk to people.

Crocker: I think Roy Day might know more about that than I would.

Fry: I'll ask him tomorrow. [laughter] That's always the sixty-four dollar question, I guess.

Crocker: Yes.

II THE 1952 REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

The California Delegation and the Convention

Fry: Maybe we'd better move on to 1952. Earl Warren wanted to run for president and he had his own delegation. But also there was a Republican delegation started by, I think, Harold Morton and William Keck, and Keith McCormac in Bakersfield, who got together another rival delegation. McCormac said at one point they approached Nixon to be their candidate. Were you familiar with that?

Crocker: I heard of it, but I wasn't involved.

Fry: Did any of them ever approach you to be on that delegation?

Crocker: No.

Fry: As Warren was gathering the names for his delegation, who asked you to be on it? It might have been Bernie Brennan. It might have been Bill Knowland. It could have been Mac Faries.

Crocker: I can't remember. I'm a little suspicious of Mac Faries, but I'm not absolutely positive.

Fry: In what way?

Crocker: As a delegate.

Fry: That he wasn't loyal? To whom?

Crocker: [straining to hear] That he wasn't what?

Fry: You said you were suspicious of him. What did you mean?

Crocker: You mean of Warren?

Fry: I thought you said you were suspicious of Mac Faries.

Crocker: No, no. Mac Faries was always a very high type, very honorable, very straightforward. He's a very high caliber man.

Fry: Did Bernie Brennan work for Nixon in 1950? I think he did [choosing delegates possibly].

Crocker: Yes.

Fry: What did he do?

Crocker: As I remember, he handled some of the publicity and some of the public relations.

Fry: Could you tell me about this delegation for Warren? Was this supposed to be a coalition of the pro-Taft and pro-Eisenhower and the pro-Warren people, or was it supposed to be really all Warren? How did you perceive that at the time?

Crocker: I think it was sort of a coalition, but I'm not positive. Many of the people on that delegation were independent thinkers, and they had supported Governor Warren the same as I had when he ran for governor. But then when he wanted to run for the senate or some other position, that was something else. So, that was the situation there.

Fry: With Eisenhower and Taft running, those were two pretty powerful people, attractive to voters. Which one did you tend toward, Taft or Eisenhower?

Crocker: President Eisenhower, because he--I was just a little afraid--I admired Senator Taft very much, but he didn't have the glamour nor the--and President Eisenhower was more moderate. I thought Senator Taft was very conservative, maybe more so than--and he might have trouble getting elected.

Fry: On the train going to Chicago, when Nixon boarded at Denver, he felt that it would be wiser for the delegation to let it be known then that they would support Eisenhower, because he was trying to avoid a deadlock. Did Nixon talk to you about it at that time?

Crocker: I don't know if he personally talked to me about it at that time, but I knew from all the rumors, and all that I had understood, that that was his feeling.

Fry: Apparently quite a few other people on the train too felt that way.

Crocker: Yes.

Fry: I'm not sure that I've got the delegation divided up right in my mind, but I think Pat Hillings was one that felt that it would be better to go ahead and come out for Eisenhower early.

Crocker: You mean come out early for President Eisenhower?

Fry: For Eisenhower, yes.

Crocker: I would imagine so, that Pat Hillings felt that way.

Fry: Do you remember who some of the others were?

Crocker: No. I would guess McIntyre Faries probably was that way, but I can't remember.

Fry: He said not, or at least not for the first ballot.

Crocker: You have to explain (this is off the record) that oftentimes men who are on delegations, especially if they're chairmen or vice chairmen, it's their duty to be kind of neutral and not to come out ahead of the convention for anyone, because it's not considered very ethical. You're supposed to have an open mind.

Now, it is true that if you're just a delegate, that's one thing. But if you're a chairman of a delegation--

Fry: He was about to become national committeeman.

Crocker: Well, if you're national committeeman or if you're chairman of the delegation or something like that, you're theoretically, and should be, neutral. Maybe your own feeling is different, or you'd vote differently, but openly, and [in] publicity and all, you're supposed to be neutral.

Fry: It wasn't an open delegation. Everybody had signed the affidavit of support for Earl Warren.

Crocker: Yes. But I think it was generally known or recognized that if Eisenhower would throw his hat in the ring then they might switch, but on the first vote they would honor Governor Warren by a vote for him, knowing that the other states wouldn't be voting for him and knowing that--that is, most of them wouldn't--and knowing that maybe in the end he didn't have too much chance.

Fry: Yes. I guess the Warren forces strategy lay in case of a draw between Taft and Eisenhower; then Warren could ride right through the middle and get the nomination.

Crocker: Yes.

Fry: Do you remember that "fair play resolution," on the seating of the contested delegates from Georgia and Texas and Louisiana?

Crocker: I never got in on that especially.

Fry: You didn't? Because the delegation had to vote for that.

Crocker: Yes, I realize. But I don't remember, except that I knew they were having difficulties. But I wasn't personally involved.

Fry: That's what pretty much put it over the top for Eisenhower, because his delegates were the ones that were finally seated. If that hadn't happened, then it might have been a tie between Eisenhower and Taft.

[end tape 1, side 2; begin tape 2, side 1]

Crocker: I've been a delegate to four national conventions and an alternate to one. Sometimes you're apt to get confused a little bit.

Fry: I'm sure you can, because there's so much that gones on in each convention. The reason Iasked you about that fair play amendment was because--

Crocker: I remember hearing about it, but I wasn't one of the leaders or was directly involved.

Fry: I think it played a big part in Nixon becoming vice-president, but I don't know. Nixon, in one of his books, says that he supported Eisenhower from way back--like March or April or sometime. Was that your impression?

Crocker: I think so, yes.

Fry: So Nixon was really on the Eisenhower bandwagon for quite a while. Some of his biographers state that Dewey had early conferences with Nixon back in the early spring about being a vice-presidential candidate. So I thought maybe you could tell me what you had perceived at the time about Nixon's chances for the vice-president and about when they occurred.

Crocker: It was rumored on the delegation that he had a chance.

Fry: When? Before you got to Chicago?

Crocker: Mostly when we got to Chicago, but out here it was also rumored around. We [delegates] didn't get to talk to one another until we were on the train, and back there, but it was kind of rumored around that Nixon had a fair chance.

Fry: Did he know about it on the train?

Crocker: Oh, I think so. You mean, that he would be chosen?

Fry: Yes.

Crocker: I don't know. I think he knew that he might have a fairly good chance, but I don't think it was confirmed at that time. That would be my impression.

Fry: Yes, I guess you could never really be sure until it actually happens. The other thing was, what rumors were you hearing about Earl Warren and an appointment he might get?

Crocker: There was talk about the Supreme Court justice.

Fry: Yes, but when? We're trying to figure out at what point this offer was made.

Crocker: I think it was kind of rumored at the time at the convention. Of course, he'd have to wait until there was an opening and so forth.

Fry: Yes. Were you aware of the goal of Henry Cabot Lodge? Some people say that he's the one that master-minded Nixon's move into the vice-presidency. Other people say that it was Herb Brownell, and other people say that it was Dewey. Do you have any knowledge?

Crocker: I think it was a combination of all of them. Which one was the most influential, I don't know.

Fry: I wonder what Eisenhower's own preferences were. Did you ever hear anything about that?

Crocker: I don't know. I think he had an open mind. He had come out of the army. He was used to running things and that you [were] promoted on the way on up over the years, and you were awarded for your service and ability and so forth. In politics, all of a sudden you can go from an ordinary businessman to end with the vice-presidency or something like that. Eisenhower just wasn't, in my opinion, quite used to that system. But he was pretty careful, in my opinion, in his choice and selection. He listened to quite a few influential men.

Fry: Do you remember the Nixon fund? Nixon had to give a speech on television to explain it. Dana Smith was one of the people who were holding it for him here in Los Angeles, and maybe you were too; I don't know. It was a relatively small fund, I think about $18,000. One of the theories on that is that this charge was initially made by those people in the Warren delegation who had been upset about Nixon's campaigning for Eisenhower on the Warren delegation.

Crocker: Yes. I remember hearing about the fund, but I never got involved in it very much as I remember.

Fry: You weren't one of the keepers of the funds or anything?

Crocker: No, not that I remember, no.

Fry: Were you aware at the time that this may have been made public because some of the members of the delegation were mad at Nixon because he--

Crocker: It may have been for that reason, yes.

Fry: Did you help Nixon campaign any after he became vice-president? For example, he had a campaign train that went through California and up through Bakersfield and the Valley.

Crocker: You mean after he was nominated?

Fry: After he was nominated.

Crocker: I got out letters from friends and several people and got out letters and things like that, but I was just one of the many people that were trying to help.

Fry: Well, I thought maybe you would have some stories to tell about the public reaction and so forth to Nixon at that point.

Crocker: He was such a good speaker, and he had [not] made enough enemies prior to then so he didn't have much opposition. Because of his speaking ability and his knowledge of issues, he did very well, of course.

Fry: To wind this up, could you help me assess the relationship between Earl Warren and Richard Nixon about this time? The information in books is that there was some disaffection between them, but it's not clear why.

Crocker: If I had to guess--and this is purely a guess--I think Earl Warren wanted to be president of the United States. He wanted the nomination. As head of the California delegation, he was trying to get it at the national convention, and he didn't want anybody to stand in his way, especially from California. While I don't think he had any personal dislike of Nixon as a man, he was naturally a rival and wanted ultimately to be president of the United States.

Fry: Of course, people were also thinking about Nixon.

Crocker: A lot of people on the delegation wanted him to be president of the United States. So, that was the basic difference.

Fry: Let me ask you about Loyd Wright, because he had fallen off Warren's bandwagon at this point. Was he an active supporter of Nixon? He's one of these people that was changing from--

Crocker: As I remember, he was. He was a very influential attorney, highly respected and well liked. As I remember, he was for Nixon.

Comparisons Between the 1946 Campaign and 1950, 1952

Fry: I meant to ask you one question and forgot it. What did Nixon do in his own 1950 campaign from the standpoint of managing it? Can you kind of give me a feel there of how much he was able to be in contact? Helen Gahagan Douglas told me that she just could hardly find out what was going on in the campaign as a whole because she was so busy giving speeches and campaigning.

Crocker: The way it started out, in his first congressional campaign, I became chairman of the committee. We used to have lunch with Nixon and a few others, like Roy Day and a few others that were active in the campaign, in other words, the campaign committee chairmen of the various divisions. We'd have lunch together--we tried to have lunch together--most every Saturday noon. We would review the mistakes we had made and how we could correct those mistakes, what strategy we would use and what we should do in the following week or weeks ahead. Most of the time, as I say, we would meet on Saturdays [at] noon and the committee would be there. If we were short of money--if that was our problem--or if we weren't getting enough exposure in the newspapers, we would work on that. And if we weren't getting enough prominent names on the committee for supporters that way, we'd work on that, or whatever. We'd discuss what we'd done in the previous week and what our objectives were and what our weaknesses were and how we could correct those.

Fry: You had really close contact, then.

Crocker: Oh, yes. We'd just sit down. We had small groups, and we'd have lunch together most Saturdays. Now, occasionally, when he was up in Northern California campaigning, we'd skip the meetings.

Fry: Wait a minute--I'm back in '46. Are you talking about 1950?

Crocker: I'm talking about his first campaign.

Fry: Forty-six.

Crocker: His other campaigns after his first campaign, he'd have a state chairman and so forth, and they didn't have all this personal contact. So I was on this committee and so forth [but] maybe I'd only see him once a month. But when he first ran for congress, the first time, his name was so little known and he'd had such little exposure that we thought we ought to meet every Saturday noon.

Fry: In a campaign like his first senatorial campaign--

Crocker: Then that was different. As I remember it, maybe he'd occasionally meet with a group from Southern California here [in Los Angeles] or in [inaudible]. He'd go up to the San Joaquin Valley and meet with a group there. Maybe some other week he'd go up to San Francisco and meet up there, and some other time we'd be down in San Diego and meet down there. They worked the route that way.

Fry: When you were working with the newspapers was he able to tell you what kind of stories he wanted submitted or to check on what the story was before you put it in?

Crocker: Oh, yes. As a rule, he might write up an article, or he would send out somebody like Roy Day on his first campaign [1946] and they'd discuss the issues, and Roy would maybe write it up. Then he'd submit it to Nixon for accuracy and approval.

Fry: How were the ads in the newspapers handled in the 1950 senatorial campaign against Helen Gahagan Douglas?

Crocker: On the senatorial, while Roy Day had a lot to do with that, they also tried to get the newspapers all throughout the state to work with them. It's only when Nixon ran for Congress that Roy Day really took, you might say, complete charge. But when he ran for the Senate, then Roy Day tried to help him in Southern California here, but Nixon generally had somebody up in Northern California and down in San Diego handling the publicity down there.

Fry: So these were professional men.

Crocker: Yes.

Fry: But was Nixon still in charge and checking what went out and so forth?

Crocker: Oh, yes. He watched those things fairly carefully.

Fry: Was there anything that ever came out that Nixon had retracted?

Crocker: Once or twice, but I don't think it was anything of any great consequence.

Fry: I know that happened once in Earl Warren's first gubernatorial campaign, and he was really upset about it. [laughter] Usually one candidate has this happen at least once to them.

I don't want to contribute to your malnutrition, [laughter] so I can close this off since it is lunchtime. Is there something else that you think of that you want to include in the early campaigns of Nixon?

Crocker: I think he was completely unsophisticated when he ran the first campaign. He'd never been active around politics and never been active in Washington. After he'd been there awhile, he had much more self assurance on his other campaigns. He knew the issues better and handled himself better. That's about all I could say.

Fry: I sure do thank you for your time.

Crocker: Not at all.

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ROY P. CROCKER'S RELATIONSHIP WITH PRESIDENT NIXON

In 1946 several leading Republicans in the old 12th Congressional District (now the 24th) were invited to a meeting in Alhambra by Roy O. Day of Pomona. We had four meetings in the evening to try and get a suitable candidate to beat the liberal Democrat Jerry Voorhis who had been reelected five times in a district that was predominately Republican.

Herman L. Perry, Manager of the Bank of American branch in Whittier, knew about Richard M. Nixon's abaility as a debater when he was in Whittier College. He telephoned to Nixon, who was in Baltimore renegotiating airplane contracts for the U. S. Navy Group, and suggested that he return to California and appear as a prospective candidate before the Fact Finding Committee, consisting of leading Republicans in the 12th Congressional District. Nixon appeared at about the second meeting of the committee and made an instantaneous favorable impression and he was selected as the candidat over seven other aspirants. Nixon received all but eight votes on the final ballot and then the vote was made unanimous.

There were three assembly districts in the 12th Congressional District and three members from each district were selected to manage the primary campaign. I was one of the nine members chosen and I was elected Chairman of the Campaign. Roy Day was chosen by the committee as the Campaign Manager.

Most every Saturday noon the members of the Campaign Committee had lunch with Nixon at a restaurant in Alhambra where we discussed the events of the previous week and made plans for the next week.

The members of the Committee that handled the Primary Campaign were as follows:

At first many people doubted that Nixon could beat Jerry Voorhis and thus were not willing to make financial contributions to the campaign. Because of the desperate need for campaign expenses, I also became, unofficially, Finance Chairman as well as Chairman of the campaign and for the first few months of the campaign I put up several hundred dollars every month in order to meet expenses.

Nixon challenged Voorhis to a debate. One of the first debates was held in the auditorium of the Junior High School in South Pasadena. Nixon challenged Voorhis to deny that he had not been a member of various designated radical organizations. Voorhis did not deny the accusations and from then on the campaign started to attract attention and interest of the voters in the 12th District. Then contributions started coming in in larger amounts. As there was no Republican opponent Nixon naturally won the Republican nomination in the primaries.

The big contest was in the final elected in November.

Roy Day managed the primary campaign and Harrison McCall managed the final election.

After the primary campaign there was a need to put a greater effort in the final campaign so the committee decided to employ the three Republican assemblymen in the district to campaign for Nixon. These were Ernest Geddes of Pomona, Tom Erwin of Whitter and _____ Smith of Alhambra. Also Murray Chotiner, at my suggestion, was called in to help on the strategy.

I believe there were three debates between Nixon and Voorhis.

Nixon won thefinal election in November and he was re-elected to Congress again. I helped in this campaign also.

In 1950 Senator Downey, a Democrat, was in poor health

so he decided that he would not run for reelection.

Democratic Congresswoman, Helen Gahagan Douglas, the wife of Melvin Douglas, the actor, ran for United States Senator against Nixon. A few of Nixon's friends, including myself, spent most of three days at the San Ysidro Ranch in Montecito. I managed the Statewide agricultural campaign for Nixon and also helped raise money. Mrs. Douglas was an outspoken New Deal Liberal. Murray Chotiner was a pragmatic campaign manager and the campaign was very bitter. Nixon won, but the California Liberal Democrats appeared never to forgive Nixon.

Nixon won the Senate seat.

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